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TAUCHNITZ EDITION.

VOL. 3677.

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BY
GERTRUDE FRANKLIN ATHERTON.

IN TWO VOLUMES. — VOL. I.

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THE CONQUEROR

BEING THE TRUE AND ROMANTIC STORY OF

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

BY

GERTRUDE FRANKLIN ATHERTON

AUTHOR OF "THE CALIFORNIANS," "THE DOOMSWOMAN," ETC.

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"Je considère Napoleon, Fox, et Hamilton comme les trois plus grands hommes de notre époque, et si je devais me prononcer entre les trois, je donnerais sans hesiter la première place à Hamilton. Il avait deviné l'Europe."

TALLEYRAND, *Études sur la République.*

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TO THE DISTINGUISHED MEN WITHOUT WHOSE SUGGESTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT THIS ATTEMPT TO RECREATE THE GREATEST OF OUR STATESMEN WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN MADE

THE RT. HON. JAMES BRYCE, M.P.

DR. ALLAN McLANE HAMILTON.

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EXPLANATION.

It was my original intention to write a biography of Alexander Hamilton in a more flexible manner than is customary with that method of reintroducing the dead to the living, but without impinging upon the territory of fiction. But after a visit to the British and Danish West Indies in search of the truth regarding his birth and ancestry, and after a wider acquaintance with the generally romantic character of his life, to say nothing of the personality of this most endearing and extraordinary of all our public men, the instinct of the novelist proved too strong; I no sooner had pen in hand than I found myself working in the familiar medium, although preserving the historical sequence. But, after all, what is a character novel but a dramatised biography? We strive to make our creations as real to the world as they are to us. Why, then, not throw the graces of fiction over the sharp hard facts that historians have laboriously gathered? At all events, this infinitely various story of Hamilton appealed too strongly to my imagination to be frowned aside, so here, for better or worse, is the result. Nevertheless, and although the method may cause the book to read like fiction, I am conscientious in asserting that almost every important incident here related of his American career is founded on documentary or published facts or upon family tradition; the few that are not have their roots among the probabilities, and suggested themselves. As for the West Indian part, although I was obliged to work upon the bare

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skeleton I unearthed in the old Common Records and Church Registers, still the fact remains that I did find the skeleton, which I have emphasised as far as is artistically possible. No date is given nor deed referred to that cannot be found by other visitors to the Islands. Moreover, I made a careful study of these Islands as they were in the time of Hamilton and his maternal ancestors, that I might be enabled to exercise one of the leading principles of the novelist, which is to create character not only out of certain well-known facts of heredity, but out of understood conditions. In this case I had, in addition, an extensive knowledge of Hamilton's character to work backward from, as well as his estimate of the friends of his youth and of his mother. Therefore I feel confident that I have held my romancing propensity well within the horizon of the probabilities; at all events, I have depicted nothing which in any way interferes with the veracity of history. However, having unburdened my imagination, I shall, in the course of a year or two, write the biography I first had in mind. No writer, indeed, could assume a more delightful task than to chronicle, in any form, Hamilton's stupendous services to this country and his infinite variety.

G. F. A.

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NEVIS.

In the eighteenth century Nevis was known as The Mother of the English Leeward Caribbees. A Captain-General ruled the group in the name of the King, but if he died suddenly, his itinerant duties devolved upon the Governor of Nevis until the crown heard of its loss and made choice of another to fill that high and valued office. She had a Council and a House of Assembly, modelled in miniature upon the Houses of Peers and Commons; and was further distinguished as possessing the only court in the English Antilles where pirates could be tried. The Council was made up of ten members appointed by the Captain-General but commanded by "its own particular and private Governor." The freeholders of the Island chose twenty-four of their number to represent them in the House of Assembly; and the few chronicles of that day agree in asserting that Nevis during her hundred proud years of supremacy was governed brilliantly and well. But the careful administration of good laws contributed in part only to the celebrity of an Island which to-day, still British as she is, serves but as a pedestal for the greatest of American statesmen. In those old days she was a queen as well as a mother. Her planters were men of immense wealth and lived the life of grandees. Their cane-fields covered the mountain on all its sides and subsidiary peaks, rising to the very fringe of the cold forest on the cone of a volcano long since extinct. The "Great Houses," built invariably upon an eminence that

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commanded a view of the neighbouring islands,—St. Christopher, Antigua, Montserrat,—were built of blocks of stone so square and solid and with a masonry so perfect that one views their ruins in amazement to-day. They withstood hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, and tidal waves. They were impregnable fortresses against rioting negroes and spasmodically aggressive Frenchmen. They even survived the abolition of slavery, and the old gay life went on for many years. English people, bored or in search of health, came for the brilliant winter, delighted with the hospitality of the planters, and to renew their vitality in the famous climate and sulphur baths, which, of all her possessions, Time has spared to Nevis. And then, having weathered all the ills to which even a West Indian Island can be subject, she succumbed—to the price of sugar. Her great families drifted away one by one. Her estates were given over to the agent for a time, finally to the mongoose. The magnificent stone mansions, left without even a caretaker, yielded helplessly to the diseases of age, and the first hurricane entering unbarred windows carried their roofs to the sea. In Charles Town, the capital since the submergence of James Town in 1680, are the remains of large town houses and fine old stone walls, which one can hardly see from the roadstead, so thick are the royal palms and the cocoanut-trees among the ruins, wriggling their slender bodies through every crevice and flaunting their glittering luxuriance above every broken wall.

But in the days when the maternal grandparents of Alexander Hamilton looked down a trifle upon those who dwelt on other isles, Nevis recked of future insignificance as little as a beauty dreams of age. In the previous century England, after the mortification of the Royalists by Cromwell, had sent to Nevis Hamiltons, Herberts,

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Russells, and many another refugee from her historic houses. With what money they took with them they founded the great estates of the eighteenth century, and their sons sent their own children to Europe to become accomplished men and women. Government House was a miniature court, as gay and splendid as its offices were busy with the commerce of the world. The Governor and his lady drove about the Island in a carriage of state, with outriders and postilions in livery. When the Captain-General came he outshone his proud second by the gorgeousness of his uniform only, and both dignitaries were little more imposing than the planters themselves. It is true that the men, despite their fine clothes and powdered perukes, preferred a horse's back to the motion of a lumbering coach, but during the winter season their wives and daughters, in the shining stuffs, the pointed bodices, the elaborate headdress of Europe, visited Government House and their neighbours with all the formality of London or Bath. After the first of March the planters wore white linen; the turbaned black women were busy among the stones of the rivers with voluminous wardrobes of cambric and lawn.

Several estates belonged to certain offshoots of the ducal house of Hamilton, and in the second decade of the eighteenth century Walter Hamilton was Captain-General of the English Leeward Caribbees and "Ordinary of the Same." After him came Archibald Hamilton, who was, perhaps, of all the Hamiltons the most royal in his hospitality. Moreover, he was a person of energy and ambition, for it is on record that he paid a visit to Boston, fleeing from the great drought which visited Nevis in 1737. Then there were William Leslie Hamilton, who practised at the bar in London for several years, but returned to hold official position on Nevis, and his brother Andrew, both

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sons of Dr. William Hamilton, who spent the greater part of his life on St. Christopher. There were also Hugh Hamilton, Charles, Gustavus, and William Vaughan Hamilton, all planters, most of them Members of Council or of the Assembly.

And even in those remote and isolated days, Hamiltons and Washingtons were associated. The most popular name in our annals appears frequently in the Common Records of Nevis, and there is no doubt that when our first President's American ancestor fled before Cromwell to Virginia, a brother took ship for the English Caribbees.

From a distance Nevis looks like a solitary peak in mid-ocean, her base sweeping out on either side. But behind the great central cone—rising three thousand two hundred feet—are five or six lesser peaks, between which are dense tropical gorges and mountain streams. In the old days, where the slopes were not vivid with the light green of the cane-field, there were the cool and sombre groves of the cocoanut-tree, mango, orange, and guava.

Even when Nevis is wholly visible there is always a white cloud above her head. As night falls it becomes evident that this soft aggravation of her beauty is but a night robe hung on high. It is at about seven in the evening that she begins to draw down her garment of mist, but she is long perfecting that nocturnal toilette. Lonely and neglected, she still is a beauty, exacting and fastidious. The cloud is tortured into many shapes before it meets her taste. She snatches it off, redisposes it, dons and takes it off again, wraps it about her with yet more enchanting folds, until by nine o'clock it sweeps the sea; and Nevis, the proudest island of the Caribbees, has secluded herself from those cynical old neighbours who no longer bend the knee.

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THE CONQUEROR.

BOOK I.

RACHAEL LEVINE.

I.

Nevis gave of her bounty to none more generously than to John and Mary Fawcett. In 1685 the revocation of the Edict of Nantes had sent the Huguenots swarming to America and the West Indies. Faucette was but a boy when the Tropics gave him shelter, and learning was hard to get; except in the matter of carving Caribs. But he acquired the science of medicine somehow, and settled on Nevis, remodelled his name, and became a British subject. Brilliant and able, he was not long accumulating a fortune; there were swamps near Charles Town that bred fever, and the planters lived as high and suffered as acutely as the English squires of the same period. His wife brought him money, and in 1714 they received a joint legacy from Captain Frank Keynall; whether a relative of hers or a patient of his, the Records do not tell.

Mary Fawcett was some twenty years younger than her husband, a high-spirited creature, with much intelligence, and a will which in later years John Fawcett

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found himself unable to control. But before that period, when to the disparity in time were added the irritabilities of age in the man and the imperiousness of maturity in the woman, they were happy in their children, in their rising fortunes, and, for awhile, in one another.

For twenty-eight years they lived the life of the Island. They built a Great House on their estate at Gingerland, a slope of the Island which faces Antigua, and they had their mansion in town for use when the Captain-General was abiding on Nevis. While Mary Fawcett was bringing up and marrying her children, managing the household affairs of a large estate, and receiving and returning the visits of the other grandees of the Island, to say nothing of playing her important part in all social functions, life went well enough. Her children, far away from the swamps of Charles Town, throve in the trade winds which temper the sun of Nevis and make it an isle of delight. When they were not studying with their governesses, there were groves and gorges to play in, ponies to ride, and monkeys and land-crabs to hunt. Later came the gay life of the Capital, the routs at Government House, frequent even when the Chief was elsewhere, the balls at neighbouring estates, the picnics in the cool high forests, or where more tropical trees and tree ferns grew thick, the constant meeting with distinguished strangers, and the visits to other islands.

The young Fawcetts married early. One went with her husband, Peter Lytton, to the island of St. Croix. The Danish Government, upon obtaining possession of this fertile island, in 1733, immediately issued an invitation to the planters of the Leeward Caribbees to immigrate, tempting many who were dissatisfied with the British Goverment or wished for larger estates than they could

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acquire on their own populous islands. Members of the Lytton, Mitchell, and Stevens families of St. Christopher were among the first to respond to the liberal offer of the Danish Government. The two sons of James Lytton, Peter and James, grew up on St. Croix, Danish by law, British in habit and speech; and both married women of Nevis. Peter was the first to wed, and his marriage to young Mary Fawcett was the last to be celebrated in the Great House at Gingerland.

When Peter Lytton and his wife sailed away, as other sons and other daughters had sailed before, to return to Nevis rarely,—for those were the days of travel unveneered,—John and Mary Fawcett were left alone: their youngest daughter, she who afterward became the wife of Thomas Mitchell of St. Croix, was at school in England.

By this time Dr. Fawcett had given up his practice and was living on his income. He took great interest in his cane-fields and mills, and in the culture of limes and pine-apples; but in spite of his outdoor life his temper soured and he became irritable and exacting. Gout settled in him as a permanent reminder of the high fortunes of his middle years, and when the Gallic excitability of his temperament, aggravated by a half-century of hot weather, was stung to fiercer expression by the twinges of his disease, he was an abominable companion for a woman twenty years closer to youth.

In the solitudes of the large house Mary Fawcett found life unendurable. Still handsome, naturally gay of temper, and a brilliant figure in society, she frequently deserted her elderly husband for weeks at a time. The day came when he peremptorily forbade her to leave the place without him. For a time she submitted, for although

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a woman of uncommon independence of spirit, it was not until 1740 that she broke free of traditions and astonished the island of Nevis. She shut herself up with her books and needle-work, attended to her house and domestic negroes with the precision of long habit, saw her friends when she could, and endured the exactions of her husband with only on occasional but mighty outburst.

It was in these unhappy conditions that Rachael Fawcett was born.

II.

THE last affliction the Fawcetts expected was another child. This little girl came an unwelcome guest to a mother who hated the father, and to Dr. Fawcett, not only because he had outgrown all liking for crying babies, but because, as in his excited disturbance he admitted to his wife, his fortune was reduced by speculations in London, and he had no desire to turn to in his old age and support another child. Then Mary Fawcett made up her definite mind: she announced her intention to leave her husband while it was yet possible to save her property for herself and the child to whom she soon became passionately attached. Dr. Fawcett laughed and shut himself up in a wing where the sounds of baby distress could not reach him; and it is doubtful if his glance ever lingered on the lovely face of his youngest born. Thus came into the world under the most painful conditions one of the unhappiest women that has lived. It was her splendid destiny to become the mother of the greatest American of his centuries, but this she died too soon to know, and she accomplished her part with an immediate bitterness of lot

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which was remorselessly ordained, no doubt, by the great Law of Compensation.

There were no divorce laws on the Islands in the eighteenth century, not even an act for separate maintenance; but Mary Fawcett was a woman of resource. It took her four years to accomplish her purpose, but she got rid of Dr. Fawcett by making him more than anxious to be rid of her. The Captain-General, William Matthew, was her staunch friend and admirer, and espoused her cause to the extent of issuing a writ of supplicavit for a separate maintenance. Dr. Fawcett gradually yielded to pressure, separated her property from his, that it might pass under her personal and absolute control, and settled on her the sum of fifty-three pounds, four shillings annually, as a full satisfaction for all her dower or third part of his estate.

Mistress Fawcett was no longer a woman of consequence, for even her personal income was curtailed by the great drought of 1737, and Nevis, complaisant to the gallantry of the age, was scandalised at the novelty of a public separation. But she was free, and she was the woman to feel that freedom to her finger-tips; she could live a life with no will in it but her own, and she could bring up her little girl in an atmosphere of peace and affection. She moved to an estate she owned on St. Christopher and never saw John Fawcett again. He died a few years later, leaving his diminished property to his children. Rachael's share was the house in Charles Town.

The spot on which Rachael spent her childhood and brief youth was one of the most picturesque on the mountain range of St. Christopher. Facing the sea, the house stood on a lofty eminence, in the very shadow of Mount Misery. Immediately behind the house were the high

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peaks of the range, hardly less in pride than the cone of the great volcano. The house was built on a ledge, but one could step from the terrace above into an abrupt ravine, wrenched into its tortuous shape by earthquake and flood, but dark for centuries with the immovable shades of a virgin tropical forest. The Great House, with its spacious open galleries and verandahs, was surrounded with stone terraces, overflowing with the intense red and orange of the hibiscus and croton bush, the golden browns and softer yellows of less ambitious plants, the sensuous tints of the orchid, the high and glittering beauties of the palm and cocoanut. The slopes to the coast were covered with cane-fields, their bright young greens sharp against the dark blue of the sea. The ledge on which the house was built terminated suddenly in front, but extended on the left along a line of cliff above a chasm, until it sloped to the road. On this flat eminence was an avenue of royal palms, which, with the dense wood on the hill above it, was to mariners one of the most familiar landmarks of the Island of "St. Kitts." From her verandah Mary Fawcett could see, far down to the right, a large village of negro huts, only the thatched African roofs visible among the long leaves of the cocoanut palms with which the blacks invariably surround their dwellings. Beyond was Brimstone Hill with its impregnable fortress. And on the left, far out at sea, her purple heights and palm-fringed shores deepening the exquisite blue of the Caribbean by day, a white ever changing spirit in the twilight, and no more vestige of her under the stars than had she sunk whence she came—Nevis. Mary Fawcett never set foot on her again, but she learned to sit and study her with a whimsical affection which was one of the few liberties she allowed her imagination. But if the un-

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happiest years of her life had been spent there, so had her fairest. She had loved her brilliant husband in her youth, and all the social triumphs of a handsome and fortunate young woman had been hers. In the deep calm which now intervened between the two mental hurricanes of her life, she sometimes wondered if she had exaggerated her past afflictions; and before she died she knew how insignificant the tragedy of her own life had been.

Although Rachael was born when her parents were past their prime, the vitality that was in her was concentrated and strong. It was not enough to give her a long life, but while it lasted she was a magnificent creature, and the end was abrupt; there was no slow decay. During her childhood she lived in the open air, for except in the cold nights of a brief winter only the jalousies were closed; and on that high shelf even the late summer and early autumn were not insufferable. Exhausted as the trade winds become, they give what little strength is in them to the heights of their favourite isles, and during the rest of the year they are so constant, even when storms rage in the North Atlantic, that Nevis and St. Christopher never feel the full force of the sun, and the winter nights are cold.

Rachael was four years old when her parents separated, and grew to womanhood remembering nothing of her father and seeing little of her kin, scattered far and wide. Her one unmarried sister, upon her return from England, went almost immediately to visit Mrs. Lytton, and married Thomas Mitchell, one of the wealthiest planters of St. Croix. Mary Fawcett's children had not approved her course, for they remembered their father as the most indulgent and charming of men, whose frequent tempers were quickly forgotten; and year by year she became more wholly

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devoted to the girl who clung to her with a passionate and uncritical affection.

Clever and accomplished herself, and quick with ambition for her best beloved child, she employed the most cultivated tutors on the Island to instruct her in English, Latin, and French. Before Rachael was ten years old, Mistress Fawcett had the satisfaction to discover that the little girl possessed a distinguished mind, and took to hard study, and to *les grâces,* as naturally as she rode a pony over the hills or shot the reef in her boat.

For several years the women of St. Christopher held aloof, but many of the planters who had been guests at the Great House in Gingerland called on Mistress Fawcett at once, and proffered advice and service. Of these William Hamilton and Archibald Hamn became her staunch and intimate friends. Mr. Hamn's estate adjoined hers, and his overlooker relieved her of much care. Dr. James Hamilton, who had died in the year preceding her formal separation, had been a close friend of her husband and herself, and his brother hastened with assurance of his wish to serve her. He was one of the eminent men of the Island, a planter and a member of Council; also, a "doctor of physic." He carried Rachael safely through her childhood complaints and the darkest of her days; and if his was the hand which opened the gates between herself and history, who shall say in the light of the glorified result that its master should not sleep in peace?

In time his wife called, and his children and stepchildren brought a new experience into the life of Rachael. She had been permitted to gambol occasionally with the "pic'nees" of her mother's maids, but since her fourth year had not spoken to a white child until little Catherine

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Hamilton came to visit her one morning and brought Christiana Huggins of Nevis. Mistress Huggins had known Mary Fawcett too well to call with Mistress Hamilton, but sent Christiana as a peace offering. Mary's first disposition was to pack the child off while Mistress Hamilton was offering her embarrassed explanations; but Rachael clung to her new treasure with such shrieks of protest that her mother, disconcerted by this vigour of opposition to her will, permitted the intruder to remain.

The wives of other planters followed Mistress Hamilton, for in that soft voluptuous climate, where the rush and fret of great cities are but a witch's tale, disapproval dies early. They would have called long since had they not been a trifle in awe of Nevis, more, perhaps, of Mistress Fawcett's sharp tongue, then indolent. But when Mistress Hamilton suddenly reminded them that they were Christians, and that Dr. Fawcett was dead, they put on their London gowns, ordered out their coaches, and called. Mary Fawcett received them with a courteous indifference. Her resentment had died long since, and they seemed to her, with their coaches and brocades and powdered locks, but the ghosts of the Nevis of her youth. Her child, her estate, and her few tried friends absorbed her. For the sake of her daughter's future, she ordered out her ancient coach and made the round of the Island once a year. The ladies of St. Kitts were as moderately punctilious.

And so the life of Rachael Fawcett for sixteen years passed uneventfully enough. Her spirits were often very high, for she inherited the Gallic buoyancy of her father as well as the brilliant qualities of his mind. In the serious depths of her nature were strong passions and a tendency to melancholy, the result no doubt of the unhappy conditions of her birth. But her mother managed so to occupy

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her eager ambitious mind with hard study that the girl had little acquaintance with herself. Her English studies were almost as varied as a boy's, and in addition to her accomplishments in the ancient and modern languages, she painted, and sang, played the harp and guitar. Mary Fawcett, for reasons of her own, never let her forget that she was the most educated girl on the Islands.

"I never was one to lie on a sofa all day and fan myself, while my children sat on the floor with their blacks, and munched sugar-cane, or bread and sling," she would remark superfluously. "All my daughters are a credit to their husbands; but I mean that you shall be the most brilliant woman in the Antilles."

The immediate consequences of Rachael's superior education were two: her girl friends ceased to interest her, and ambitions developed in her strong imaginative brain. In those days women so rarely distinguished themselves individually that it is doubtful if Rachael had ever heard of the phenomenon, and the sum of her worldly aspirations was a wealthy and intellectual husband who would take her to live and to shine at foreign courts. Her nature was too sweet and her mind too serious for egoism or the pettier vanities, but she hardly could help being conscious of the energy of her brain; and if she had passed through childhood in ignorance of her beauty, she barely had entered her teens when her happy indifference was dispelled; for the young planters besieged her gates.

Girls mature very early in the tropics, and at fourteen Rachael Fawcett was the unresponsive toast from Basseterre to Sandy Point. Her height was considerable, and she had the round supple figure of a girl who has lived the out-door life in moderation; full of strength and grace, and no exaggeration of muscle. She had a fine mane of

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reddish fair hair, a pair of sparkling eager grey eyes which could go black with passion or even excited interest, a long nose so sensitively cut that she could express any mood she chose with her nostrils, which expanded quite alarmingly when she flew into a temper, and a full well-cut mouth. Her skin had the whiteness and transparency peculiar to the women of St. Kitts and Nevis; her head and brow were nobly modelled, and the former she carried high to the day of her death. It was set so far back on her shoulders and on a line so straight that it would look haughty in her coffin. What wonder that the young planters besieged her gates, that her aspirations soared high, that Mary Fawcett dreamed of a great destiny for this worshipped child of her old age? As for the young planters, they never got beyond the gates, for a dragon stood there. Mistress Fawcett had no mind to run the risk of early entanglements. When Rachael was old enough she would be provided with a distinguished husband from afar, selected by the experienced judgment of a woman of the world.

But Mary Fawcett, still hot-headed and impulsive in her second half-century, was more prone to err in crises than her daughter. In spite of the deeper passions of her nature, Rachael, except when under the lash of strong excitement, had a certain clearness of insight and deliberation of judgment which her mother lacked to her last day.

III.

RACHAEL had just eaten the last of her sixteenth birthday sweets when, at a ball at Government House, she met John Michael Levine. It was her début; she was the

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fairest creature in the room, and, in the idiom of Dr. Hamilton, the men besieged her as were she Brimstone Hill in possession of the French. The Governor and the Captain-General had asked her to dance, and even the women smiled indulgently, disarmed by so much innocent loveliness.

Levine, albeit a Dane, and as colourless as most of his countrymen, was her determined suitor before the night was half over. It may be that he was merely dazzled by the regal position to which the young men had elevated her, and that his cold blood quickened at the thought of possessing what all men desired, but he was as immediate and persistent in his suit as any excitable creole in the room. But Rachael gave him scant attention that night. She may have been intellectual, but she was also a girl, and it was her first ball. She was dazzled and happy, delighted with her conquests, oblivious to the depths of her nature.

The next day Levine, strong in the possession of a letter from Mr. Peter Lytton,—for a fortnight forgotten,—presented himself at Mistress Fawcett's door, and was admitted. The first call was brief and perfunctory, but he came the next day and the next. Rachael, surprised, but little interested, and longing for her next ball, strummed the harp at her mother's command and received his compliments with indifference. A week after his first call Mary Fawcett drove into town and spent an hour with the Governor. He told her that Levine had brought him a personal letter from the Governor of St. Croix, and that he was wealthy and well born. He was also, in his Excellency's opinion, a distinguished match even for the most beautiful and accomplished girl on the Island. Peter Lytton had mentioned in his letter that Levine purposed buying an estate on St. Croix and settling down to the

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life of a planter. On the following day Levine told her that already he was half a West Indian, so fascinated was he with the life and the climate, but that if she would favour his suit he would take Rachael to Copenhagen as often as she wished for the life of the world.

Mary Fawcett made up her mind that he should marry Rachael, and it seemed to her that no mother had ever come to a wiser decision. Her health was failing, and it was her passionate wish not only to leave her child encircled by the protection of a devoted husband, but to realise the high ambitions she had cherished from the hour she foresaw that Rachael was to be an exceptional woman.

Levine had not seen Rachael on the morning when he asked for her hand, and he called two days later to press his suit and receive his answer. Mistress Fawcett told him that she had made up her own mind and would perform that office for Rachael at once, but thought it best that he should absent himself until the work was complete. Levine, promised an answer on the morrow, took himself off, and Mary Fawcett sent for her daughter.

Rachael entered the library with a piece of needlework in her hand. Her mind was not on her books these days, for she had gone to another ball; but her hands had been too well brought up to idle, however her brain might dream. Mary Fawcett by this time wore a large cap with a frill, and her face, always determined and self-willed, was growing austere with years and much pain: she suffered frightfully at times with rheumatism, and her apprehension of the moment when it should attack her heart reconciled her to the prospect of brief partings from her daughter. Her eyes still burned with the fires of an indiminishable courage however; she read the yellow pages of her many books as rapidly as in her youth, and if there

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was a speck of dust on her mahogany floors, polished with orange juice, she saw it. Her negroes adored her but trembled when she raised her voice, and Rachael never had disobeyed her. She expected some dissatisfaction, possibly a temper, but no opposition.

Rachael smiled confidently and sat down. She wore one of the thin white linens, which, like the other women of the Islands, she put aside for heavier stuffs on state occasions only, and her hair had tumbled from its high comb and fallen upon her shoulders. Mary Fawcett sighed as she looked at her. She was too young to marry, and had it not been for the haunting terror of leaving her alone in the world, the Dane, well circumstanced as he was, would have been repulsed with contumely.

"Rachael," said her mother, gently, "put down your tapestry. I have something to say to you, something of great import."

Rachael dropped her work and met her mother's eyes. They were hard with will and definite purpose. In an instant she divined what was coming, and stood up. Her face could not turn any whiter, but her eyes were black at once, and her nostrils spread.

"It cannot be possible that you wish me to marry that man—Levine," she stammered. "I do not know how I can think of such a thing—but I do—it seems to me I see it in your eyes."

"Yes," said her mother, with some uneasiness. "I do; and my reasons are good—"

"I won't listen to them!" shrieked Rachael. "I won't marry him! His whiteness makes me sick! I know he is not a good man! I feel it! I never could be happy with him! I never could love him!"

Mary Fawcett looked at her aghast, and, for a moment,

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without answering; she saw her own will asserting itself, heard it on those piercing notes, and she knew that it sprang from stronger and more tragic foundations than had ever existed in her own nature; but believing herself to be right, she determined to prevail.

"What do you know about men, my darling?" she said soothingly. "You have been dreaming romantic dreams, and young Levine does not resemble the hero. That is all. Women readjust themselves marvellously quick. When you are married to him, and he is your tender and devoted husband, you will forget your prince —who, no doubt, is dark and quite splendid. But we never meet our princes, my dear, and romantic love is only one of the things we live for—and for that we live but a little while. Levine is all that I could wish for you. He is wealthy, aristocratic, and chivalrously devoted."

Her long speech had given her daughter time to cool, but Rachael remained standing, and stared defiantly into the eyes which had relaxed somewhat with anxious surprise.

"I *feel* that he is not a good man," she repeated sullenly, "and I hate him. I should die if he touched me. I have not danced with him. His hands are so white and soft, and his eyes never change, and his mouth reminds me of a shark's."

"Levine is a remarkably handsome man," exclaimed Mistress Fawcett, indignantly. "You have trained your imagination to some purpose, it seems. Forget your poets when he comes to-morrow, and look at him impartially. And cannot he give you all that you so much desire, my ambitious little daughter? Do you no longer want to go to Europe? to court? to be *grande dame* and converse with princes?"

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"Oh, yes," said Rachael. "I want that as much as ever; but I want to love the man. I want to be happy."

"Well, *do* love him," exclaimed her mother with energy. "Your father was twenty years older than myself, and a Frenchman, but I made up my mind to love him, and I did—for a good many years."

"You had to leave him in the end. Do you wish me to do the same?"

"You will do nothing of the kind. There never was but one John Fawcett."

"I don't love this Levine, and I never shall love him. I don't believe at all that that kind of feeling can be created by the brain, that it responds to nothing but the will. I shall not love that way. I may be ignorant, but I know that."

"You have read too much Shakespeare! Doubtless you imagine yourself one of his heroines—Juliet? Rosalind?"

"I have never imagined myself anybody but Rachael Fawcett. I *cannot* imagine myself Rachael Levine. But I know something of myself—I have read and thought enough for that. I could love someone—but not this bleached repulsive Dane. Why will you not let me wait? It is my right. No, you need not curl your lip—I am *not* a little girl. I may be sixteen. I may be without experience in the world, but you have been almost my only companion, and until just now I have talked with middle-aged men only, and much with them. I had no real childhood. You have educated my brain far beyond my years. To-day I feel twenty, and it seems to me that I see far down into myself—much deeper than you do. I tell you that if I marry this man, I shall be the most hopeless wretch on earth."

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Mary Fawcett was puzzled and distressed, but she did not waver for a moment. The cleverest of girls could not know what was best for herself, and the mother who permitted her daughter to take her life into her own hands was a poor creature indeed.

"Listen, my dear child," she said tenderly, "you have always trusted in me, believed me. I *know* that this is a wise and promising marriage for you. And—" she hesitated, but it was time to play her trump. "You know that my health is not good, but you do not know how bad it is. Dr. Hamilton says that the rheumatism may fly to my heart at any moment, and I *must* see you married—"

She had ejaculated the last words; Rachael had shrieked, and flung herself upon her, her excitement at this sudden and cruel revelation bursting out in screams and sobs and a torrent of tears. Her mother had seen her excited and in brief ungovernable tempers, but she never had suspected that she was capable of such passion as this; and, much disturbed, she led her off to bed, and sent for her advisers, Archibald Hamn and Dr. Hamilton.

IV.

Mr. Hamn responded at once to the widow's call, his adjacence giving him the advantage of Dr. Hamilton, of whom he was a trifle jealous. He was an old bachelor and had proposed to Mistress Fawcett—a captivating woman till her last hour—twice a year since her husband's death. But matrimony had been a bitter medicine for Mary after her imagination had ceased to sweeten it, and her invariable answer to her several suitors was the disquieting assertion that if ever she was so rash as to

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take another husband, she certainly should kill him. Archibald was not the man to conquer her prejudices, although she loved the sterling in him and attached him to her by every hook of friendship. He was a dark nervous little man, spare as most West Indians, used a deal of snuff, and had a habit of pushing back his wig with a jerking forearm when in heated controversy with Dr. Hamilton, or expounding matrimony to the widow.

Dr. Hamilton, for whose arrival Mr. Hamn was kept waiting,—Mistress Fawcett tarried until her daughter fell asleep,—was a large square man, albeit lean, and only less nervous than the widow's suitor. His white locks were worn in a queue, a few escaping to soften his big powerful face. Both men wore white linen, but Dr. Hamilton was rarely seen without his riding-boots, his advent, except in Mistress Fawcett's house, heralded by the clanking of spurs. Mary would have none of his spurs on her mahogany floors, and the doctor never yet had been able to dodge the darkey who stood guard at her doorstep.

The two men exchanged mild surmises as to the cause of the summons; but as similar summons occurred when newly wedded blacks were pounding each other's heads, provoked thereto by the galling chain of decency, or an obeah doctor had tied a sinister warning to Mistress Fawcett's knocker, neither of the gentlemen anticipated serious work. When Mary Fawcett entered the long room, however, both forgot the dignity of their years and position, and ran forward.

Dr. Hamilton lifted her as if she had been a palm leaf, and laid her on the sofa. He despatched Mr. Hamn for a glass of Spanish port, and forbade her to speak until he gave permission.

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But Mary Fawcett made brief concessions to the weakness of the flesh. She drank the wine, then sat up and told her story.

"Oh, Mary," said Dr. Hamilton, sadly, "why do you ask our advice? Your ear may listen, but never your mind. If it were a matter of business, we might even be allowed to act for you; but in a domestic—"

"What?" cried Mistress Fawcett; "have I not asked your advice a thousand times about Rachael, and have I not always taken it?"

"I recall many of the conversations, but I doubt if you could recall the advice. However, if you want it this time, I will give it to you. Don't force the girl to marry against her will—assuredly not if the man is repulsive to her. For all your brains you are a baby about men and women. Rachael knows more by instinct. She is an extraordinary girl, and should be allowed time to make her own choice. If you are afraid of death, leave her to me. I will legally adopt her now, if you choose—"

"Yes, and should you die suddenly, your wife would think Rachael one too many, what with your brood and the Edwardses to boot." Mistress Fawcett was nettled by his jibe at the limit of her wisdom. "I shall leave her with a husband. To that I have made up my mind. What have you to say, Archibald?"

This was an advantage which Mr. Hamn never failed to seize; he always agreed with the widow; Dr. Hamilton never did. Moreover, he was sincerely convinced that—save, perhaps, in matters of money—Mary Fawcett could not err.

"I like the appearance of this Dane," he said, reassuringly, "and his little country has a valiant history. This young man is quite prince-like in his bearing, and his

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extreme fairness is but one more evidence of his high breeding—"

"He looks like a shark's belly," interrupted Dr. Hamilton, "I don't wonder he sickens Rachael. I have nothing against him but his appearance, but if he came after Kitty I'd throw him out by the seat of his breeches."

"He never looked at Kitty, at Government House, nor at Mistress Montgomerie's," cried Mary. "You are jealous, Will, because Rachael has carried off the foreign prize."

Dr. Hamilton laughed, then added seriously, "I am too fond of the girl to forbear to give my advice. Let her choose her own husband. If you dare to cut out her future, as if it were one of her new frocks, you have more courage than I. She has more in her than twenty women. Let her alone for the next five years, then she will have no one to answer to but herself. Otherwise, my lady, you may find yourself holding your breath in a hurricane track, with no refuge from the storm you've whipped up but five feet underneath. If you won't give her to me, there are her sisters. They are all wealthy—"

"They are years older than Rachael and would not understand her at all."

"I can't see why they should not understand her as well as a strange man."

"He will be her husband, madly in love with her."

"Levine will never be madly in love with anybody. Besides, it would not matter to Rachael if her sisters did not understand her; she has too strong a brain not to be independent of the ordinary female nonsense; moreover, she has a fine disposition and her own property. But if her husband did not understand her,—in other words, if their tastes proved as opposite as their temperaments,—it

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would make a vast deal of difference. Sisters can be got rid of, but husbands—well, you know the difficulties."

"I will think over all you have said," replied Mary, with sudden humility; she had great respect for the doctor. "But don't you say a word to Rachael."

"I'm far too much afraid of you for that. But I wish that Will were home or Andrew old enough. I'd set one of them on to cut this Dane out. Well, I must go; send for me whenever you are in need of advice," and with a parting laugh he strode out of the house and roared to the darkey to come and fasten his spurs.

Archibald Hamn, who foresaw possibilities in the widow's loneliness, and who judged men entirely by their manners, remained to assure Mistress Fawcett of the wisdom of her choice, and to offer his services as mediator. Mary laughed and sent him home. She wrote to Levine not to call until she bade him, and for several days pondered deeply upon her daughter's opposition and Dr. Hamilton's advice. The first result of this perturbing distrust in her own wisdom was a violent attack of rheumatism in the region of her heart; and while she believed herself to be dying, she wrung from her distracted daughter a promise to marry Levine. She recovered from the attack, but concluded that, the promise being won, it would be folly to give it back. Moreover, the desire to see her daughter married had been aggravated by her brush with death, and after another interview with Levine, in which he promised all that the fondest mother could demand, she opened her chests of fine linen.

Rachael submitted. She dared not excite her mother. Her imagination, always vivid though it was, refused to picture the end she dreaded; and she never saw Levine alone. His descriptions of life in Copenhagen interested

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her, and when her mother expatiated upon the glittering destiny which awaited her, ambition and pride responded, although precisely as they had done in her day-dreams. She found herself visioning Copenhagen, jewels, brocades, and courtiers; but she realised only when she withdrew to St. Kitts, that Levine had not entered the dream, even to pass and bend the knee. Often she laughed aloud in merriment. As the wedding-day approached, she lost her breath more than once, and her skin chilled. During the last few days before the ceremony she understood for the first time that it was inevitable. But time—it was now three months since the needlewomen were set at the trousseau—and her unconscious acceptance of the horrid fact had trimmed her spirit to philosophy, altered the habit of her mind. She saw her mother radiant, received the personal congratulations of every family on the Island. Her sisters came from St. Croix, and made much of the little girl who was beginning life so brilliantly; beautiful silks and laces had come from New York, and Levine had given her jewels, which she tried on her maid every day because she thought the mustee's tawny skin enhanced their lustre. She was but a child in spite of her intellect. Her union with the Dane came to appear as one of the laws of life, and she finished by accepting it as one accepted an earthquake or a hurricane. Moreover, she was profoundly innocent.

V.

MARY FAWCETT accompanied the Levines to Copenhagen, but returned to St. Christopher by a ship which left Denmark a month later, being one of those women

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who picture their terrestrial affairs in a state of dissolution while deprived of their vigilance. She vowed that the North had killed her rheumatism, and turned an absent ear to Rachael's appeal to tarry until Levine was ready to return to St. Croix. She remained long enough in Denmark, however, to see her daughter presented at court, and installed with all the magnificence that an ambitious mother could desire. There was not a misgiving in her mind, for Rachael, if somewhat inanimate, could not be unhappy with an uxorious husband and the world at her feet; and although for some time after her marriage she had behaved like a naughty child caught in a trap, and been a sore trial to her mother and Mr. Levine, since her arrival in Copenhagen she had deported herself most becomingly and indulged in no more tantrums. Levine had conducted himself admirably during his trying honeymoon. Upon his arrival in Copenhagen he had littered his wife's boudoir with valuable gifts, and exhibited the beauty he had won with a pride very gratifying to his mother-in-law. In six months he was to sail for his estates on St. Croix, and pay an immediate visit to St. Kitts, whence Mistress Fawcett would return with her daughter for a sojourn of several months. She returned to her silent home the envy of many Island mothers.

Rachael wrote by every ship, and Mary Fawcett pondered over these letters, at first with perplexity, finally with a deep uneasiness. Her daughter described life in Denmark, the court and society, her new gowns and jewels, her visits to country houses, the celebrities she met. But her letters were literary and impersonal, nor was there in them a trace of her old energy of mind and vivacity of spirit. She never mentioned Levine's name, nor made an intimate allusion to herself.

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"Can she no longer love me?" thought Mary Fawcett at last and in terror; "this child that I have loved more than the husband of my youth and all the other children I have borne? It cannot be that she is unhappy. She would tell me so in a wild outburst—indeed she would have run home to me long since. Levine will never control her. Heaven knows what would have happened if I had not gone on that wedding journey. But she settled down so sweetly, and I made sure she would have loved him by this. It is the only thing to do if you have to live with one of the pests. Perhaps that is it—she has given him all her love and has none left for me." And at this she felt so lonely and bitter that she almost accepted Archibald Hamn when he called an hour later. But in the excitement of his risen hopes his wig fell on the floor, and she took offence at his yellow and sparsely settled scalp.

There were few gleams of humour left in life for Mary Fawcett. Rachael's letters ceased abruptly. Her mother dared not sail for Denmark, less she pass the Levines on their way to St. Croix. She managed to exist through two distracted months, then received a note from her daughter, Mrs. Mitchell.

"Rachael is Here," it ran, "but refuses to see Us. I do not know what to think. I drove over as soon as I heard of Their arrival. Levine received Me and was as Courteous and Polished as ever, but Rachael had a *Headache* and did not come out. Mary and I have been there Twice since, and with the *same* result. Levine assured us that he had begged her to see her Sisters, but that She is in a very *low* and *melancholy* state, owing doubtless to her Condition. He seemed much *concerned,* but More, I could not help thinking, because he feared to lose an Heir than

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from any *love* for my little Sister. Peter and Mary agree with Me, that *You had best come here* if You can."

Mary Fawcett, whatever her foibles, had never failed to spring upright under the stiffest blows of her life. Ignoring her physical pains, which had been aggravated by the mental terrors of the last two months, and sternly commanding the agony in her heart to be silent, she despatched a note at once to Dr. Hamilton,—Archibald Hamn was in Barbados,—asking him to charter a schooner, if no ship were leaving that day for the Danish Islands, and accompany her to St. Croix. He sent her word that they could sail on the following morning if the wind were favourable, and the black women packed her boxes and carried them on their heads to Basseterre.

That evening, as Mary Fawcett was slowly walking down the avenue, leaning heavily on her cane, too wretched to rest or sleep, a ship flying the German colours sailed past. She wondered if it had stopped at St. Croix, then forgot it in the terrible speculations which her will strove to hold apart from her nerves.

Wearied in body, she returned to the house and sat by the window of her room, striving to compose her mind for sleep. She was forcing herself to jot down instructions for her housekeeper, whom she had taught to read, when she heard a chaise and a pair of galloping horses enter the avenue. A moment later, Dr. Hamilton's voice was roaring for a slave to come and hold his horses. Then it lowered abruptly and did not cease.

Mary Fawcett knew that Rachael had come to her, and without her husband. For a moment she had a confused idea that the earth was rocking, and congratulated herself that the house was too high for a tidal wave to reach. Then Dr. Hamilton entered with Rachael in his arms and

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laid her on the bed. He left at once, saying that he would return in the morning. Mary Fawcett had not risen, and her chair faced the bed. Rachael lay staring at her mother until Mary found her voice and begged her to speak. She knew that her hunger must wait until she had stood at the bar and received her sentence.

Rachael told her mother the story of her married life from the day she had been left alone with John Levine,—a story of unimaginable horrors. Like many cold men to whom the pleasures of the world are, nevertheless, easy, Levine was a voluptuary and cruel. Had his child been safely born, there would have been no measure in his brutality. Rachael had watched for her opportunity, and one night when he had been at a state function in Christianstadt, too secure in her apparent apathy to lock her door, she had bribed a servant to drive her to Frederikstadt, and boarded the ship her maid had ascertained was about to leave. She knew that he would not follow her, for there was one person on earth he feared, and that was Mary Fawcett. He would not have returned to St. Croix, had his investments been less heavy; but on his estates he was lord, and had no mind that his mother-in-law should set foot on them while he had slaves to hold his gates.

Mary Fawcett listened to the horrid story, at first with a sort of frantic wonder, for of the evil of life she had known nothing; then her clear mind grasped it, her stoicism gave way, and she shrieked and raved in such agony of soul that she had no fear of hell thereafter. Rachael had to rise from the bed and minister to her, and the terrified blacks ran screaming about the place, believing that their mistress had been cursed.

She grew calm in time, but her face was puckered like an old apple, and her eyes had lost their brilliancy for

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ever. And it was days before she realised that her limbs still ached.

Rachael never opened her lips on the subject again. She went back to bed and clung to her mother and Dr. Hamilton until her child was born. Then for three months she recognised no one, and Dr. Hamilton, with all his skill, did not venture to say whether or not her mind would live again.

The child was a boy, and as blond as its father. Mary Fawcett stood its presence in the house for a month, then packed it off to St. Croix. She received a curt acknowledgment from Levine, and an intimation that she had saved herself much trouble. As for Rachael, he would have her back when he saw fit. She wrote an appeal to the Captain-General and he sent her word that the Danes would never bombard Brimstone Hill, and there was no other way by which Levine could get her daughter while one of her friends ruled the Leeward Caribbees.

Many thoughts flitted through the brain of Mary Fawcett during that long vigil. Her mind for the first time dwelt with kindness, almost with softness, on the memory of her husband. Beside this awful Dane his shadow was godlike. He had been high-minded and a gentleman in his worst tantrums, and there was no taint of viciousness in him. A doubt grew in her brain, grew to such disquieting proportions that she sometimes deserted Rachael abruptly and went out to fatigue herself in the avenue. Had she done wrong to leave him alone in his old age, to bear, undiverted, the burden of a disease whose torments she now could fully appreciate, to die alone in that great house with only his slaves to tend him? It had seemed to her when she left him that human nature could stand no more, and that she was justified; but she was an old

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woman now and knew that all things can be endured. When that picture of his desolate last years and lonely death had remorselessly shaped itself in her imagination, and she realised that it would hang there until her hands were folded, she suffered one more hour of agony and abasement, then caught at the stoicism of her nature, accepted her new dole, and returned to her daughter.

VI.

RACHAEL'S mind struggled past its eclipse, but her recovery was very slow. Even after she recognised her mother and Dr. Hamilton, she sat for months staring at Nevis, neither opening a book nor looking round upon the life about her. But she was only eighteen, and her body grew strong and vital again. Gradually it forced its energies into her brain, released her spirit from its apathy, buried memory under the fresher impressions of time. A year from the day of her return, if there were deep and subtle changes in her face and carriage, which added ten years to her appearance, she was more beautiful to experienced eyes than when she had flowered for the humming-birds. She took up her studies where she had dropped them, a little of her old buoyancy revived; and if her girlishness was buried with ideals and ambitions, her intellect was clear and strong and her character more finely balanced. She flew into no more rages, boxed her attendants' ears at rarer intervals, and the deliberation which had seemed an anomaly in her character before, became a dominant trait, and rarely was conquered by impulse. When it worked alone her mother laid down her weapons, edged as they still were, and when impulse flew to its back,

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Mary Fawcett took refuge in oblivion. But she made no complaint, for she and her daughter were more united than when the young girl had seemed more fit to be her grandchild.

The Governor of St. Christopher had written a letter to his friend, the Governor of St. Croix, which had caused that estimable functionary to forbid Levine the door of Government House. Levine could not endure social ostracism. He left St. Croix immediately, and took his son Peter with him. To this child Rachael never referred, and her mother doubted if she remembered anything associated with its impending birth. Perhaps she believed it dead. At all events, she made no sign. Except that she was called Mistress Levine, there was nothing in her outer life to remind her that for two years the markers in her favourite books had not been shifted. She had studied music and painting with the best masters in Copenhagen, and in the chests which were forwarded by her sisters from St. Croix, there were many new books. She refused to return to society, and filled her time without its aid; for not only did she have the ample resources of her mind, her mother, the frequent companionship of Dr. Hamilton and four or five other men of his age and attainments, but she returned to the out-door life with enthusiasm. On her spirit was an immovable shadow, in her mind an indelible stain, but she had strong commonsense and a still stronger will. An experience which would have embittered a less complete nature, or sent a lighter woman to the gallantries of society, gave new force and energy to her character, even while saddening it. To the past she never willingly gave a thought; neither was she for a moment unconscious of its ghost.

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VII.

Two years passed. Rachel was twenty, a beautiful and stately creature, more discussed and less seen than any woman on the islands of Nevis and St. Christopher. Occasionally Christiana Huggins paid her a visit, or Catherine Hamilton rode over for the day; but although Christiana at least, loved her to the end, both were conscious of her superiority of mind and experience, and the old intimacy was not resumed.

Dr. Hamilton had used all his influence in the Council to promote a special bill of divorce, for he wanted Rachael to be free to marry again. He had no faith in the permanent resources of the intellect for a young and seductive woman, and he understood Rachael very thoroughly. The calm might be long, but unless Levine died or could be legally disposed of, she would give the Islands a heavier shock than when the innovation of Mary Fawcett had set them gabbling. Against the conservatism of his colleagues, however, he could make no headway, and both the Governor and Captain-General disapproved of a measure which England had never sanctioned.

But Dr. Hamilton and her mother were more disturbed at the failure of the bill than Rachael. Time had lifted the shadow of her husband from the race, but, never having loved, even a little, her imagination modelled no pleasing features upon the ugly skull of matrimony. It is true that she sometimes thought of herself as a singularly lonely being, and allowed her mind to picture love and its companionships. As time dimmed another picture she caught herself meditating upon woman's chief inheritance, and

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moving among the shadows of the future toward that larger and vitalising part of herself which every woman fancies is on earth in search of her. When she returned from these wanderings she sternly reminded herself that her name was Levine, and that no woman after such an escape had the right to expect more. She finally compelled herself to admit that her avoidance of society was due to prudence as well as to her stern devotion to intellect, then studied harder than ever.

But it is a poor fate that waits upon the gathering together of many people.

VIII.

RACHAEL was riding home one afternoon from Basseterre, where she had been purchasing summer lawns and cambrics. It was March, and the winter sun had begun to use its summer fuel; but the trades blew softly, and there was much shade on the road above the sea. There was one long stretch, however, where not a tree grew, and Rachael drew rein for a moment before leaving the avenue of tamarinds which had rustled above her head for a mile or more. Although it was a hot scene that lay before her, it was that which, when away from home, for some reason best known to her memory, had always been first to rise. The wide pale-grey road rose gradually for a long distance, dipped, and rose again. On either side were cane-fields, their tender greens sharp against the deep hard blue of the sea on the left, rising to cocoanut groves and the dark heights of the mountains above the road. Far away, close to the sea, was Brimstone Hill, that huge isolated rock so near in shape to the crater of Mount Misery. Its fortifi-

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cations showed their teeth against the faded sky, and St. Christopher slept easily while tentative conquerors approached, looked hard at this Gibraltar of the West Indies, and sailed away.

But there scarcely was a sail on the sea to-day. Its blue rose and fell, in that vast unbroken harmony which quickens the West Indian at times into an intolerable sense of his isolation. Rachael recalled how she had stared at it in childish resentment, wondering if a mainland really lay beyond, if Europe were a myth. She did not care if she never set foot on a ship again, and her ambitions were in the grave with her desire for a wealthy and intellectual husband.

On the long road, rising grey and hot between the bright green cane-fields, horsemen approached, and a number of slave women moved slowly: women with erect rigid backs balancing large baskets or stacks of cane on their heads, the body below the waist revolving with a pivotal motion which suggests an anatomy peculiar to the tropics. They had a dash of red about them somewhere, and their turbans were white. Rachael's imagination never gave her St. Kitts without its slave women, the "pic'nees" clinging to their hips as they bore their burdens on the road or bent over the stones in the river. They belonged to its landscape, with the palms and the cane-fields, the hot grey roads, and the great jewel of the sea.

Rachael left the avenue and rode onward. One of the horsemen took off his Spanish sombrero and waved it. She recognised Dr. Hamilton and shook her whip at him. He and his companion spurred their horses, and a moment later Rachael and James Hamilton had met.

"An unexpected pleasure for me, this sudden descent of my young kinsman," said the doctor, "but a great one,

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for he brings me news of all in Scotland, and he saw Will the day before he sailed."

"It is too hot to stand here talking," said Rachael. "Come home with me to a glass of Spanish port, and cake perhaps."

The doctor was on his way to a consultation, but he ordered his relative to go and pay his respects to Mistress Fawcett, and rode on whistling. The two he had recklessly left to their own devices exchanged platitudes, and covertly examined each other with quick admiration.

There are dark Scots, and Hamilton was one of them. Although tall and slight, he was knit with a close and peculiar elegance, which made him look his best on a horse and in white linen. His face was burnt to the hue of brick-dust by the first quick assault of the tropic sun, but it was a thin face, well shaped, in spite of prominent cheek-bones, and set with the features of long breeding; and it was mobile, fiery, impetuous, and very intelligent: ancestral coarseness had been polished fine long since.

They left the road and mounted toward the dark avenue of the Fawcett estate, Rachael wondering if her mother would be irritated at the informality of the stranger's first call; he should have arrived in state with Dr. Hamilton at the hour of five. Perhaps it was to postpone the moment of explanation that she permitted her horse to walk, even after they had reached the level of the avenue, and finally to crop the grass while she and Hamilton dismounted and sat down in a heavy grove of tamarinds on the slope of the hill.

"I'm just twenty-one and have my own way to make," he was telling her. "There are three before me, so I couldn't afford the army, and as I've a fancy for foreign lands, I've come out here to be a merchant. I have so

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many kinsmen in this part of the world, and they've all succeeded so well, I thought they'd be able to advise me how best to turn over the few guineas I have. My cousin, the doctor, has taken me in hand, and if I have any business capacity I shall soon find it out. But I ached for the army, and failing that, I'd have liked being a scholar —as I know you are, by your eyes."

His Scotch accent was not unlike that of the West Indians, particularly of the Barbadians; but his voice, although it retained the huskiness of the wet North, had, somewhere in its depths, a peculiar metallic quality which startled Rachael every time it rang out, and was the last of all memories to linger, when memories were crumbling in a brain that could stand no more.

How it happened, Rachael spent the saner hours of the morrow attempting to explain, but they sat under the tamarinds until the sun went down, and Nevis began to robe for the night. Once they paused in their desultory talk and listened to the lovely chorus of a West Indian evening, that low incessant ringing of a million tiny bells. The bells hung in the throats of nothing more picturesque than grasshoppers, serpents, lizards, and frogs so small as to be almost invisible, but they rang with a harmony that the inherited practice of centuries had given them. And beyond was the monotonous accompaniment of the sea on the rocks. Hamilton lived to be an old man, and he never left the West Indies; but sometimes, at long and longer intervals, he found himself listening to that Lilliputian orchestra, his attention attracted to it, possibly, by a stranger; and then he remembered this night, and the woman for whom he would have sacrificed earth and immortality had he been lord of them.

Heaven knows what they talked about. While it was

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light they stared out at the blue sea or down on the rippling cane-fields, not daring to exchange more than a casual and hasty glance. Both knew that they should have separated the moment they met, but neither had the impulse nor the intention to leave the shade of the wood; and when the brief twilight fell and the moon rose, there still was Nevis, and after her the many craft to divert their gaze. Hamilton was honourable and shy, and Rachael was a woman of uncommon strength of character and had been brought up by a woman of austere virtue. These causes held them apart for a time, but one might as well have attempted to block two comets rushing at each other in the same orbit. The magnetism of the Inevitable embraced them and knit their inner selves together, even while they sat decorously apart. Rachael had taken off her hat at once, and even after it grew dark in their arbour, Hamilton fancied he could see the gleam of her hair. Her eyes were startled and brilliant, and her nostrils quivered uneasily, but she defined none of the sensations that possessed her but the overwhelming recrudescence of her youth. It had seemed to her that it flamed from its ashes before Dr. Hamilton finished his formal words of introduction, and all its forgotten hopes and impulses, timidity and vagueness, surged through her brain during those hours beside the stranger, submerging the memory of Levine. Indeed, she felt even younger than before maturity so suddenly had been thrust upon her; for in those old days she had been almost as severely intellectual as yesterday, and when she had dreamed of the future, it had been with the soberness of an overtaxed brain. But to-day even the world seemed young again. She fancied she could hear the unquiet pulses of the Island, so long grown old, and Nevis

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had never looked so fair. She hardly was conscious of her womanhood, only of that possessing sense of happiness in youth. As for Hamilton, he had never felt otherwise than young, although he was a college-bred man, something of a scholar, and he had seen more or less of the world since his boyhood. But the intensity and ardour of his nature had received no check, neither were they halfway on their course; and he had never loved. It had seemed to him that the Island opened and a witch came out, and in those confused hours he hardly knew whether she were good or bad, his ideal woman or his ideal devil; but he loved her. He was as pale as his sunburn would permit him to be, and his hands were clasped tightly about his knees, when relief came in the shape of Mary Fawcett.

Her daughter's horse had gone home and taken the stranger with him, and Mistress Fawcett, with quick suspicion, new as it was, started at once down the avenue. Rachael heard the familiar tapping of her mother's stick, hastily adjusted her hat, and managed to reach the road with Hamilton before her mother turned its bend.

Mary Fawcett understood and shivered with terror. She was far from being her imperious self as her daughter presented the stranger and remarked that he was a cousin of Dr. Hamilton, characteristically refraining from apology or explanation.

"Well," she said, "the doctor will doubtless bring you to call some day. I will send your horse to you. Say good evening to the stranger, Rachael, and come home." She was one of the most hospitable women in the Caribbees, and this was the kinsman of her best friend, but she longed for power to exile him out of St. Kitts that night.

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Hamilton lifted his hat, and Rachael followed her mother. She was cold and frightened, and Levine's white malignant face circled about her.

Her mother requested her support, and she almost carried the light figure to the house. Mistress Fawcett sent a slave after Hamilton's horse, then went to her room and wrote a note to Dr. Hamilton, asking him to call on the following day and to come alone. The two women did not meet again that night.

But there is little privacy in the houses of St. Kitts and Nevis. Either the upper part of almost every room is built of ornamental lattice-work, or the walls are set with numerous jalousies, that can be closed when a draught is undesirable but conduct the slightest sound. Rachael's room adjoined her mother's. She knew that the older woman was as uneasily awake as herself, though from vastly different manifestations of the same cause. At four o'clock, when the guinea fowl were screeching like demons, and had awakened the roosters and the dogs to swell the infernal chorus of a West Indian morning, Rachael sat up in bed and laughed noiselessly.

"What a night!" she thought. "And for what? A man who companioned me for four hours as no other man had ever done? and who made me feel as if the world had turned to fire and light? It may have been but a mood of my own, it is so long since I have talked with a man near to my own age—and he is so near!—and yet so real a man. . . . No one could call him handsome, for he looks like a flayed Carib, and I have met some of the handsomest men in Europe and not given them a thought. Yet this man kept me beside him for four hours, and has me awake a whole night because he is not with me. Has the discipline of these last years, then, gone for nothing?

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Am I but an excitable West Indian after all, and shall I have corded hands before I am twenty-five? It was a mistake to shut myself away from danger. Had I been constantly meeting the young men of the Island and all strangers who have come here during the last two years, I should not be wild for this one—even if he has something in him unlike other men—and lie awake all night like the silly women who dream everlastingly of the lover to come. I am a fool."

She lit her candle and went into her mother's room. Mary Fawcett was sitting up in bed, her white hair hanging out of her nightcap. It seemed to her that the end of the world had come, and she cursed human nature and the governors of the Island.

"I know what has kept you awake" said Rachael, "but do not fear. It was but a passing madness—God smite those guinea fowl! I have lived the life of a nun, and it is an unnatural life for a young woman. Yesterday I learned that I have not the temperament of the scholar, the recluse—that is all. I should have guessed it sooner—then I should not have been fascinated by this brilliant Scot. It was my mind that flew eagerly to companionship—that was all. The hours were pleasant. I would not regret them but for the deep uneasiness they have caused you. To-day I shall enter the world again. There are many clever and accomplished young men on St. Kitts. I will meet and talk to them all. We will entertain them here. There is a ball at Government House to-night, another at Mistress Irwin's on Wednesday week. I promise you that I will be as gay and as universal as a girl in her first season, and this man shall see no more of me than any other man."

Her mother watched her keenly as she delivered her

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long tirade. Her face was deeply flushed. The arm that held the candle was tense, and her hair fell about her splendid form like a cloud of light. Had Hamilton seen anything so fair in Europe? What part would he play in this scheme of catholicity?

"You will meet this man if you go abroad," she replied. "Better stay here and forbid him the gates."

"And think about him till I leap on my horse and ride to meet him? A fevered imagination will make a god of a Tom Noddy. If I see him daily—with others—he will seem as commonplace as all men."

Mary Fawcett did not speak for some moments. Then she said: "Hark ye, Rachael. I interfered once and brought such damnable misery upon you that I dare not—almost—(she remembered her note to Dr. Hamilton) interfere again. This time you shall use your own judgment, something you have taught me to respect. Whatever the result, I will be to the end what I always have been, the best friend you have. You are very strong. You have had an awful experience, and it has made a woman of thirty of you. You are no silly little fool, rushing blindly into the arms of the first man whose eyes are black enough. You have been brought up to look upon light women with horror. In your darkest days you never sought to console yourself as weaker women do. Therefore, in spite of what I saw in both your faces yesterday, I hope."

"Yes—and give yourself no more uneasiness. Could *I* look upon the love of man with favour? Not unless I were to be born again, and my memory as dead as my body."

"If you love, you will be born again; and if this man overmasters your imagination, your memory might quite

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as well be dead. One of the three or four things in my life that I have to be thankful for is that I never had to pass through that ordeal. You are far dearer to me than I ever was to myself, and if you are called upon to go through that wretched experience, whose consequences never finish, and I with so little time left in which to stand by and protect you—" She changed abruptly. "Promise me that you will do nothing unconsidered, that you will not behave like the ordinary Francesca—for whom I have always had the most unmitigated contempt. The hour. The man. The fall. The wail: 'The earth rocked, the stars fell. I knew not what I did!' You have deliberation and judgment. Use them now—and do not ramble alone in the gorge with this handsome Scot—for he is a fine man; I would I could deny it. I felt his charm, although he did not open his mouth."

Rachael's eyes flashed. "Ah! did you?" she cried. "Well, but what of that? Are not our creoles a handsome race, and have not all but a few been educated in England? Yes, I will promise you—if you think all this is serious enough to require a promise."

"But you care so little for the world. You would be sacrificing so much less than other women—nevertheless it would make you wretched and humiliate just as much; do not forget that. I almost am tempted to wish that you had a lighter nature—that you would flirt with love and brush it away, while the world was merely amused at a suspected gallantry. But *you*—you would love for a lifetime, and you would end by living with him openly. There is no compromise in you."

"Surely we have become more serious than an afternoon's talk with an interesting stranger should warrant. I am full of a sudden longing for the world, and who knows

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but I shall become so wedded to it that I would yield it for no man? Besides, do I not live to make you happy, to reward as best I can your unselfish devotion? If ever I could love any man more than I love you, then that love would be overwhelming indeed. But although I can imagine myself forgetting the world in such a love, I cannot picture you on the sacrificial altar."

IX.

RACHAEL was asleep when Dr. Hamilton called. Mistress Fawcett received him in the library, which was at the extreme end of the long house. He laughed so heartily at her fears that he almost dispelled them. Whatever he anticipated in Rachael's future, he had no mind to apprehend danger in every man who interested her.

"For God's sake, Mary," he exclaimed, "let the girl have a flirtation without making a tragedy of it. She is quite right. The world is what she wants. If ever there was a woman whom Nature did not intend for a nun it is Rachael Levine. Let her carry out her plan, and in a week she will be the belle of the Island, and my poor cousin will be consoling himself with some indignant beauty only a shade less fair. I'll engage to marry him off at once, if that will bring sleep to your pillow, but I can't send him away as you propose. I am not King George, nor yet the Captain-General. Nor have I any argument by which to persuade him to go. I have given him too much encouragement to stay. I'll keep him away from routs as long as I can—but remember that he is young, uncommonly good-looking, and a stranger: the girls will not let me keep him in hiding for long. Now let the

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girl alone. Let her think you've forgotten my new kinsman and your fears. I don't know any way to manage women but to let them manage themselves. Bob Edwards failed with Catherine. I have succeeded. Take a leaf out of my book. Rachael is not going through life without a stupendous love affair. She was marked out for it, specially moulded and equipped by old Mother Nature. Resign yourself to it, and go out and put up your hands against the next tidal wave if you want an illustration of what interference with Rachael would amount to. I wish Levine would die, or we could get a divorce law through on this Island. But the entire Council falls on the table with horror every time I suggest it. Don't worry till the time comes. I'll fill my house with all the pretty girls on St. Kitts and Nevis, and marry this hero of romance as soon as I can."

Rachael went to the ball at Government House that night, glittering in a gown of brocade she had worn at the court of Denmark: Levine had sent her trunks to Peter Lytton's, but not her jewels. She was the most splendid creature in the rooms, and there was no talk of anyone else. But before the night was a third over she realised that the attention she would receive during this her second dazzling descent upon society would differ widely from her first. The young men bowed before her in deep appreciation of her beauty, then passed on to the girls of that light-hearted band to which she no longer belonged. She was a woman with a tragic history and a living husband; she had a reputation for severe intellectuality, and her eyes, the very carriage of her body, expressed a stern aloofness from the small and common exteriorities of life. The Governor, the members of Council, of the Assembly, of the bench and bar, and the clergy, flocked

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about her, delighted at her return to the world, but she was the belle of the matrons, and not a young man asked her to dance.

She shrugged her shoulders when she saw how it was to be.

"Can they guess that I am younger than they are?" she thought. "And would I have them? Would I share that secret with any in the world—but one? Do I want to dance—to *dance*—Good God! And talk nonsense and the gossip of the Island with these youths when I have naught to say but that my soul has grown wings and that the cold lamp in my breast has blown out, and lit again with the flame that keeps the world alive? Even if I think it best never to see him again, he has given me that, and I am young at last."

When she returned home, as the guinea fowl were at their raucous matins, she was able to tell her mother that the Scot had not attended the ball, and Mary Fawcett knew that Dr. Hamilton had managed to detain him.

But a fortnight later they met again at the house of Dr. George Irwin, an intimate friend of the Hamiltons.

The Irwins' house in Basseterre was on the north side of the Park, which was surrounded by other fine dwellings and several public buildings. The broad verandahs almost overhung the enclosure, with its great banyan tree, the royal palms about the fountain, the close avenues, the flaming hedges of croton and hibiscus, and the traveller's palm and tree ferns brought from the mountains. When a ball was given at one of the houses about this Park on a moonlight night, there was much scheming to avoid the watchful eyes of lawful guardians.

It was inevitable that Hamilton should attend this ball, for the Irwins and his relatives were in and out of

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each other's houses all day and half the night. By this time, however, he had met nearly every girl on St. Kitts, and his cousin had ridden out that afternoon to assure Mistress Fawcett that the danger weakened daily.

But for an hour, he did not leave Rachael's side that night. The beauties of St. Christopher—and they were many, with their porcelain-like complexions and distinguished features—went through all their graceful creole paces in vain. That he was recklessly in love with Rachael Levine was manifest to all who chose to look, and as undaunted by her intellect and history as any man of his cousin's mature coterie. As for Rachael, although she distributed her favours impartially for awhile, her mobile face betrayed to Dr. Hamilton that mind and body were steeped in that tremulous content which possesses a woman when close to an undeclared lover in a public place; the man, and Life and her own emotions unmortalised, the very future bounded by the gala walls, the music, the lights, and the perfume of flowers. These walls were hung with branches of orange-trees loaded with fruit, and with ferns and orchids brought fresh from the mountains. A band of blacks played on their native instruments the fashionable dances of the day with a weird and barbaric effect, and occasionally sang a wailing accompaniment in voices of indescribable softness. There was light from fifty candles, and the eternal breeze lifted and dispersed the heavy perfume of the flowers. Hamilton had been in many ball-rooms, but never in one like this. He abstained from the madeiras and ports which were passed about at brief intervals by the swinging coloured women in their gay frocks and white turbans; but he was intoxicated, nevertheless, and more than once on the point of leaving the house. The unreality of it

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all held him more than weakness, for in some things James Hamilton was strong enough. The weakness in him was down at the roots of his character, and he was neither a feathercock nor a flasher. He had no intention of making love to Rachael until he saw his future more clearly than he did to-night. During the fortnight that had passed since he met her, he had thought of little else, and to-night he wanted nothing else, but impulsive and passionate as he was, he came of a race of hard-headed Scots. He had no mind for a love affair of tragic seriousness, even while his quickened imagination pictured the end.

He deliberately left her side after a time and joined a group of men who were smoking in the court. After an hour of politics his brain had less blood in it, and when he found himself standing beside Rachael on the verandah he suggested that they follow other guests into the Park. He gave Rachael his arm in the courtly fashion of the day, and they walked about the open paths and talked of the negroes singing in the cane-fields, and the squalid poverty of the North, as if their hearts were as calm as they are to-day. People turned often to look at them, commenting according to the mixing of their essences, but all concurring in praise of so much beauty. Hamilton's sunburn had passed the acute stage, leaving him merely brown, and his black silk small-clothes and lace ruffles, his white silk stockings and pumps, were vastly becoming. His hair, lightly powdered, was tied with a white ribbon, but although he carried himself proudly, there was no manifest in his bearing that the vanities consumed much of his thought. He was gallanted like a young blood of the period, and so were the young men of St. Kitts. Rachael wore a heavy gold-

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coloured satin, baring the neck, and a stiff and pointed stomacher, her hair held high with a diamond comb. Her fairness was dazzling in the night-light, and it was such a light as Hamilton never had seen before: for in the Tropics the moon is golden, and the stars are crystal. The palm leaves, high on their slender shafts, glittered like polished dark-green metal, and the downpour was so dazzling that more than once the stranger shaded his eyes with his hand. Had it not been for the soft babble of many voices, the silence would have been intense, until the ear was tuned to the low tinkle of the night bells, for the sea was calm.

Once, as if in explanation for words unspoken, he commented nervously on the sensation of unreality with which these tropic scenes inspired him, and Rachael, who longed to withdraw her hand from his arm, told him of an entertainment peculiar to the Islands, a torchlight hunt for land-crabs, which once a year travel down from the mountains to the sea, to bathe and shed their shells. Words hastened. Before she drew breath she had arranged a hunt for the night of the 10th of April, and received his promise to be one of her guests. They were not so happy as they had been within doors, for the world seemed wider. But their inner selves pressed so hard toward each other that finally they were driven to certain egotisms as a relief.

"I think little of the future," she said, after a direct question, "for that means looking beyond my mother's death, and that is the one fact I have not the courage to face. But of course I know that it holds nothing for me. A ball occasionally, and the conversation of clever men who admire me but care for someone else, books the rest of the week, and life alone on a shelf of the mountain.

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The thought that I shall one day be old does not console me as it may console men, for with women the heart never grows old. The body withers, and the heart in its awful eternal youth has the less to separate and protect it from the world that has no use for it. Then the body dies and is put away, but the heart is greedily consumed to feed the great pulses of the world that lives faster every year. We give, and give, and give."

"And are only happy in giving," said Hamilton, quickly. "But if men preserve the balance of the world by taking all that women give them, at least the best of us find our happiness in the gifts of one woman, and a woman so besought dare not assert that her heart is empty. I understand—and no one more clearly than I do to-night—that if she give too much, she may curse her heart and look out bitterly upon the manifold interests that could suppress it for weeks and months—if life were full enough. Is yours? What would you sacrifice if you came to me?"

He asked the question calmly, for there were people on every side of them, but he asked it on an uncontrollable impulse, nevertheless; he had vowed to himself that he would wait a month.

His natural repose was greater than hers, for she had the excitable nerves of the Tropics. He felt her arm quiver before she dropped her hand from his arm. But she replied almost as calmly: "Nothing after my mother's death. Absolutely nothing. When a woman suffers as I have done, and her future is ruined in any case, the world counts for very little with her, unless it always has counted for more than anything else. We grow the more cynical and contemptuous as we witness the foolish gallantries of women who have so much to lose. I am

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not hard. I am very soft about many things, and since you came I am become the very tragedy of youth; but I have no respect for the world as I have seen it. For many people in the world I have a great deal, but not for the substance out of which Society has built itself. One never loses one's real friends, no matter what one does. Every circumstance of my life has isolated me from this structure called society, forced me to make my own laws. I may never be happy, because my capacity for happiness is too great, but in my own case there is no alternative worth considering. This is the substance of what I have thought since we met, but you are not to speak to me of it again while my mother lives."

"I do not promise you that—but this: that I will do much thinking before I speak again."

X.

But although they parted with formal courtesy, it was several nights before either slept. Rachael went home to her bed and lay down, because she feared to agitate her mother, but her disposition was to go out and walk the circuit of the Island, and she rose as soon as she dared, and climbed to the highest crest behind the house. It was cold there, and the wind was keen. She sat for hours and stared out at Nevis, who was rolling up her mists, indifferent to the torment of mortals.

During the past fortnight she had conceived a certain stern calm, partly in self-defence, due in part to love for her mother. But since she had left Hamilton, last night, there had been moments when she had felt alone in the Universe with him, exalted to such heights of human pas-

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sion that she had imagined herself about to become the mother of a new race. Her genius, which in a later day might have taken the form of mental creation, concentrated in a supreme capacity for idealised human passion, and its blind impulse was a reproduction of itself in another being.

Were she and Hamilton but the victims of a mighty ego roaming the Universe in search of a medium for human expression? Were they but helpless sacrifices, consummately equipped, that the result of their union might be consummately great? Who shall affirm or deny? The very commonplaces of life are components of its eternal mystery. We know absolutely nothing. But we have these facts: that a century and a half ago, on a tropical island, where, even to common beings, quick and intense love must seem the most natural thing in the world, this man and woman met; that the woman, herself born in unhappy conditions, but beautiful, intellectual, with a character developed far beyond her years and isolated home by the cruel sufferings of an early marriage, reared by a woman whose independence and energy had triumphed over the narrow laws of the Island of her birth, given her courage to snap her fingers at society—we know that this woman, inevitably remarkable, met and loved a stranger from the North, so generously endowed that he alone of all the active and individual men who surrounded her won her heart; and that the result of their union was one of the stupendous intellects of the world's history.

Did any great genius ever come into the world after commonplace pre-natal conditions? Was a maker of history ever born amidst the pleasant harmonies of a satisfied domesticity? Of a mother who was less than remarkable,

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although she may have escaped being great? Did a woman with no wildness in her blood ever inform a brain with electric fire? The students of history know that while many mothers of great men have been virtuous, none have been commonplace, and few have been happy. And lest the moralists of my day and country be more prone to outraged virtue, in reading this story, than were the easy-going folk who surrounded it, let me hasten to remind them that it all happened close upon a hundred and fifty years ago, and that the man and woman who gave them the brain to which they owe the great structure that has made their country phenomenal among nations, are dust on isles four hundred miles apart.

A century and a half ago women indulged in little introspective analysis. They thought on broad lines, and honestly understood the strength of their emotions. Moreover, although Mary Wollstonecraft was unborn and "Émile" unwritten, Individualism was germinating; and what soil so quickening as the Tropics? Nevertheless, to admit was not to lay the question, and Rachael passed through many hours of torment before hers was settled. She was not unhappy, for the intoxication lingered, and behind the methodical ticking of her reason, stood, calmly awaiting its time, that sense of the Inevitable which has saved so many brains from madness. She slept little and rested less, but that sentinel in her brain prevented the frantic hopelessness which would have possessed her had she felt herself strong enough to command James Hamilton to leave the Island.

She met him several times before the night of her entertainment, and there were moments when she was filled with terror, for he did not whisper a reference to the conversation in the Park. Had he thought better of it?

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Would he go? Would he conquer himself? Was it but a passing madness? When these doubts tormented her she was driven to such a state of jealous fury that she forgot every scruple, and longed only for the bond which would bind him fast; then reminded herself that she should be grateful, and endeavoured to be. But one day when he lifted her to her horse, he kissed her wrist, and again the intoxication of love went to her head, and this time it remained there. Once they met up in the hills, where they had been asked with others to take a dish of tea with Mistress Montgomerie. They sat alone for an hour on one of the terraces above the house, laughing and chattering like children, then rode down the hills through the cane-fields together. Again, they met in the Park, and sat under the banyan-tree, discussing the great books they had read, all of Europe they knew. For a time neither cared to finish that brief period of exquisite happiness and doubt, where imagination rules, and the world is unreal and wholly sweet, and they its first to love.

The wrenching stage of doubt had passed for Hamilton, but he thought on the future with profound disquiet. He would have the woman wholly or not at all, after Mary Fawcett's death; he knew from Dr. Hamilton that it would occur before the year was out. He had no taste for intrigue. He wanted a home, and the woman he would have rejoiced to marry was the woman he expected to love and live with for the rest of his life. Once or twice the overwhelming sense of responsibility, the certainty of children, whom he could not legalise, the possible ruin of his worldly interests, as well as his deep and sincere love for the woman, drove him almost to the bows of a homeward-bound vessel. But the sure knowledge that he should return kept him doggedly on St. Christopher. He

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even had ceased to explain his infatuation to himself by such excuse as was given him by her beauty, her grace, her strong yet charming brain. He loved her, and he would have her if the skies fell.

It is doubtful if he understood the full force of the attraction between them. The real energy and deliberation, the unswerving purpose in her magnetised the weakness at the roots of his ardent, impulsive, but unstable character. Moreover, in spite of the superlative passion which he had aroused in her, she lacked the animal magnetism which was his in abundance. Her oneness was a magnet for his gregariousness and concentrated it upon herself. That positive quality in him overwhelmed and intoxicated her; and in intellect he was far more brilliant and far less profound than herself. His wit and mental nimbleness stung and pricked the serene layers which she had carefully superimposed in her own mind to such activities as mingled playfully with his lighter moods or stimulated him in more intellectual hours. While the future was yet unbroken and imagination remodelled the face of the world, there were moments when both were exalted with a sense of completeness, and terrified, when apart, with a hint of dissolution into unrelated particles.

When a man and woman arrive at that stage of reasoning and feeling, it were idle for their chronicler to moralise; her part is but to tell the story.

XI.

MARY FAWCETT encouraged her daughter's social activity, and as Hamilton's name entered the rapid accounts of revels and routs in the most casual manner, she en-

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deavoured to persuade herself that the madness had passed with a languid afternoon. She was a woman of the world, but the one experience that develops deepest insight had passed her by, and there were shades and moods of the master passion over which her sharp eyes roved without a shock.

As she was too feeble to sit up after nine o'clock, she refused to open her doors for the crab hunt, but gave Rachael the key of a little villa on the crest of a peak behind the house, and told her to keep her friends all night if she chose.

This pavilion, designed for the hotter weeks of the hurricane season, but seldom used by the Fawcetts, was a small stone building, with two bedrooms and a living room, a swimming bath, and several huts for servants. The outbuildings were dilapidated, but the house after an airing and scrubbing was as fit for entertainment as any on St. Kitts. The furniture in the Tropics is of cane, and there are no carpets or hangings to invite destruction. Even the mattresses are often but plaited thongs of leather, covered with strong linen, and stretched until they are hard as wood. All Mary Fawcett's furniture was of mahogany, the only wood impervious to the boring of the West Indian worm. This tiny house on the mountain needed but a day's work to clean it, and another to transform it into an arbour of the forest. The walls of the rooms were covered with ferns, orchids, and croton leaves. Gold and silver candelabra had been carried up from the house, and they would hold half a hundred candles.

All day the strong black women climbed the gorge and hill, their hips swinging, baskets of wine, trays of delicate edibles, pyramids of linen, balanced as lightly on their heads as were they no more in weight and size than

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the turban beneath; their arms hanging, their soft voices scolding the "pic'nees" who stumbled after them.

Toward evening, Rachael and Kitty Hamilton walked down the mountain together, and lingered in the heavy beauty of the gorge. The ferns grew high above their heads, and palms of many shapes. The dark machineel with its deadly fruit, the trailing vines on the tamarind-trees, the monkeys leaping, chattering with terror, through flaming hibiscus and masses of orchid, the white volcanic rock, the long torn leaves of the banana-tree, the abrupt declines, crimson with wild strawberries, the loud boom of the sunset gun from Brimstone Hill—Rachael never forgot a detail of that last walk with her old friend. Hers was not the nature for intimate friendships, but Catherine Hamilton had been one of her first remembered playmates, her bridesmaid, and had hastened to companion her when she emerged from the darkness of her married life. But Catherine was an austere girl, of no great mental liveliness, and the friendship, although sincere, was not rooted in the sympathies and affections. She believed Rachael to be the most remarkable woman in the world, and had never dared to contradict her, although she lowered her fine head to no one else. But female virtue, as they expressed it in the eighteenth century, stood higher in her estimation than all the gifts of mind and soul which had been lavished upon Rachael Levine, and she was the first to desert her when the final step was taken. But on this evening there was no barrier, and she talked of her future with the man she was to marry. She was happy and somewhat sentimental. Rachael sighed and set her lips. All her girlhood friends were either married or about to be—except Christiana, who had not a care in her little world. Why were sorrow and disgrace

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for her alone? What have I done, she thought, that I seem to be accursed? I have wronged no one, and I am more gifted than any of these friends of mine. Not one of them has studied so severely, and learned as much as I. Not one of them can command the homage of such men as I. And yet I alone am singled out, first, for the most hideous fate which can attack a woman, then to live apart from all good men and women with a man I cannot marry, and who may break my heart. I wish that I had not been born, and I would not be dead for all the peace that is in the most silent depths of the Universe.

At ten o'clock, that night, the hills were red with the torches of as gay a company as ever had assembled on the Island. The Governor and Dr. Hamilton were keen sportsmen, and nothing delighted them more than to chase infuriated land-crabs down the side of a mountain. There were some twenty men in the party, and most of them followed their distinguished elders through brush and rocky passes. Occasionally, a sudden yell of pain mingled with the shouts of mirth, for land-crabs have their methods of revenge. The three or four girls whom Rachael had induced to attend this masculine frolic, kept to the high refuge of the villa, attended by cavaliers who dared not hint that maiden charms were less than land-crabs.

Hamilton and Rachael sat on the steps of the terrace, or paced up and down, watching the scene. Just beyond their crest was the frowning mass of Mount Misery. The crystal flood poured down from above, and the moon was rising over the distant hills. The sea had the look of infinity. There might be ships at anchor before Basseterre or Sandy Point, but the shoulders of the mountain hid them; and below, the world looked as if the passions of

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Hell had let loose—the torches flared and crackled, and the trees took on hideous shapes. Once a battalion of the pale venomous-looking crabs rattled across the terrace, and Rachael, who was masculine in naught but her intellect, screamed and flung herself into Hamilton's arms. A moment later she laughed, but their conversation ceased then to be impersonal. It may be said here, that if Hamilton failed in other walks of life, it was not from want of resolution where women were concerned. And he was tired of philandering.

The hunters returned, slaves carrying the slaughtered crabs in baskets. There were many hands to shell the victims, and in less than half an hour Mary Fawcett's cook sent in a huge and steaming dish. Then there were mulled wines and port, cherry brandy and liqueurs to refresh the weary, and sweets for the women. A livelier party never sat down to table; and Hamilton, who was placed between two chattering girls, was a man of the world, young as he was, and betrayed neither impatience nor ennui. Rachael sat at the head of the table, between the Governor and Dr. Hamilton. Her face, usually as white as porcelain, was pink in the cheeks; her eyes sparkled, her nostrils fluttered with triumph. She looked so exultant that more than one wondered if she were intoxicated with her own beauty; but Dr. Hamilton understood, and his supper lost its relish. Some time since he had concluded that where Mary Fawcett failed he could not hope to succeed, but he had done his duty and lectured his cousin. He understood human nature from its heights to its dregs, however, and promised Hamilton his unaltered friendship, even while in the flood of remonstrance. He was a philosopher, who invariably held out his hand to the Inevitable, with a shrug of his shoulders,

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but he loved Rachael, and wished that the ship that brought Levine to the Islands had encountered a hurricane.

The guests started for home at one o'clock, few taking the same path. The tired slaves went down to their huts. Rachael remained on the mountain, and Hamilton returned to her.

XII.

It was a month later that Rachael, returning after a long ride with Hamilton, found her mother just descended from the family coach.

"Is it possible that you have been to pay visits?" she asked, as she hastened to support the feeble old woman up the steps.

"No, I have been to Basseterre with Archibald Hamn."

"Not to St. Peter's, I hope."

"Oh, my dear, I do not feel in the mood to jest. I went to court to secure the future of my three dear slaves, Rebecca, Flora, and Esther."

Rachael placed her mother on one of the verandah chairs and dropped upon another.

"Why have you done that?" she asked faintly. "Surely—"

"There are several things I fully realise, and one is that each attack leaves me with less vitality to resist the next. These girls are the daughters of my dear old Rebecca, who was as much to me as a black ever can be to a white, and that is saying a good deal. I have just signed a deed of trust before the Registrar—to Archibald. They are still mine for the rest of my life, yours for your lifetime, or as long as you live here; then they go to

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Archibald or his heirs. I want you to promise me that they shall never go beyond this Island or Nevis."

"I promise." Rachael had covered her face with her hand.

"I believe you kept the last promise you made me. It is not in your character to break your word, however you may see fit to take the law into your own hands."

"I kept it."

"And you will live with him openly after my death. I have appreciated your attempt to spare me."

"Ah, you *do* know me."

"Some things may escape my tired old eyes, but I love you too well not to have seen for a month past that you were as happy as a bride. I shall say no more—save for a few moments with James Hamilton. I am old and ill and helpless. You are young and indomitable. If I were as vigorous and self-willed as when I left your father, I could not control you now. I shall leave you independent. Will Hamilton, Archibald, and a few others will stand by you; but alas! you will, in the course of nature, outlive them all, and have no friend in the world but Hamilton —although I shall write an appeal to your sisters to be sent to them after my death. But oh, how I wish, how I wish, that you could marry this man."

Mary Fawcett was attacked that night by the last harsh rigours of her disease and all its complications. Until she died, a week later, Rachael, except for the hour that Hamilton sat alone beside the bed of the stricken woman, did not leave her mother. The immortal happiness of the last month was forgotten. She was prostrate, literally on her knees with grief and remorse, for she believed that her mother's discovery had hastened the end.

"No, it is not so," said Mary Fawcett, one day. "My

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time has come to die. Will Hamilton will assure you of that, and I have watched the space between myself and death diminish day by day, for six months past. I have known that I should die before the year was out. It is true that I die in sorrow and with a miserable sense of failure, for you have been my best-beloved, my idol, and I leave you terribly placed in life and with little hope of betterment. But for you I have no reproach. You have given me love for love, and duty for duty. Life has treated you brutally; what has come now was, I suppose, inevitable. Human nature when it is strong enough is stronger than moral law. I grieve for you, but I die without grievance against you. Remember that. And Hamilton? He is honourable, and he loves you utterly—but is he strong? I wish I knew. His emotions and his active brain give him so much apparent force—but underneath? I wish I knew."

Rachael was grateful for her mother's unselfish assurance, but she was not to be consoled. The passions in her nature, released from other thrall, manifested themselves in a grief so profound, and at times so violent, that only her strong frame saved her from illness. For two weeks after Mary Fawcett's death she refused to see James Hamilton; but by that time he felt at liberty to assert his rights, and her finely poised mind recovered its balance under his solace and argument. Her life was his, and to punish him assuaged nothing of her sorrow. He had decided, after consultation with his cousin, to take her to Nevis, not only to seclude her from the scandalised society she knew best, but that he might better divert her mind, in new scenes, from her heavy affliction. Hamilton had already embarked in his business enterprise, but he had bought and manned a sail-boat, which would carry him

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to and from St. Kitts daily. In the dead calms of summer there was little business doing.

"I attempted no sophistry with my cousin," said Hamilton, "and for that reason I think I have put the final corking-pin into our friendship. Right or wrong we are going to live together for the rest of our lives, because I will have no other woman, and you will have no other man; and we will live together publicly, not only because neither of us has the patience for scheming and deceit, but because passion is not our only motive for union. There is gallantry on every side of us, and doubtless we alone shall be made to suffer; for the world loves to be fooled, it hates the crudeness of truth. But we have each other, and nothing else matters."

And to Rachael nothing else mattered, for her mother was dead, and she loved Hamilton with an increasing passion that was long in culminating.

XIII.

THEY sailed over to Nevis, accompanied by a dozen slaves, and took possession of Rachael's house in Main Street. It stood at the very end of the town, beyond the point where the street ceased and the road round the Island began. The high wall of the garden surrounded a grove of palms and cocoanut-trees. Only sojourners from England had occupied the big comfortable house, and it was in good repair.

When the acute stage of her grief had passed, it was idle for Rachael to deny to Hamilton that she was happy. And at that time she had not a care in the world, nor had he. Their combined incomes made them as careless

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of money as any planter on the Island. Every ship from England brought them books and music, and Hamilton was not only the impassioned lover but the tenderest and most patient of husbands. Coaches dashed by and the occupants cast up eyes and hands. The gay life of Nevis pulsed unheeded about the high walls, whose gates were always locked. The kinsman of the leading families of the Island and the most beautiful daughter of old John and Mary Fawcett were a constant and agitating theme, but two people lived their life of secluded and poignant happiness, and took Nevis or St. Kitts into little account.

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BOOK II.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

HIS YOUTH IN THE WEST INDIES AND IN THE COLONIES OF NORTH AMERICA.

I.

I SHOULD have been glad to find an old Almanac of Nevis which contained a description of its 11th of January, 1757. But one January is much like another in the Leeward Islands, and he who has been there can easily imagine the day on which Alexander Hamilton was born. The sky was a deeper blue than in summer, for the sun was resting after the terrific labours of Autumn, and there was a prick in the trade winds which stimulated the blood by day and chilled it a trifle at night. The slave-women moved more briskly, followed by a trotting brood of "pic'nees," one or more clinging to their hips, all bewailing the rigours of winter. Down in the river where they pounded the clothes on the stones, they vowed they would carry the next linen to the sulphur springs, for the very marrow in their bones was cold. In the Great Houses there were no fires, but doors and windows were closed early and opened late, and blankets were on every bed. The thermometer may have stood at 72°.

Nevis herself was like a green jewel casket, after the autumn rains. Oranges and sweet limes were yellow in

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her orchards, the long-leaved banana-trees were swelling with bunches of fruit, the guavas were ready for cream and the boiling. The wine was in the cocoanut, the royal palms had shed their faded summer leaves and glittered like burnished metal. The gorgeous masses of the croton bush had drawn fresh colour from the rain. In the woods and in the long avenues which wound up the mountain to the Great House of every estate, the air was almost cold; but out under the ten o'clock sun, even a West Indian could keep warm, and the negroes sang as they reaped the cane. The sea near the shore was like green sunlight, but some yards out it deepened into that intense hot blue which is the final excess of West Indian colouring. The spray flew high over the reef between Nevis and St. Kitts, glittering like the salt ponds on the desolate end of the larger island, the roar of the breakers audible in the room where the child who was to be called Alexander Hamilton was born.

Rachael rose to a ceaseless demand upon her attention for which she was grateful during the long days of Hamilton's absence. Alexander turned out to be the most restless and monarchical of youngsters and preferred his mother to his black attendants. She ruled him with a firm hand, however, for she had no mind to lessen her pleasure in him, and although she could not keep him quiet, she prevented the blacks from spoiling him.

During the hurricane months Hamilton yielded to her nervous fears, as he had done in the preceding year, and crossed to St. Kitts but seldom. As a matter of fact, hurricanes of the first degree are rare in the West Indies, the average to each island being one in a century. But from the 25th of August, when all the Caribbean world

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prostrates itself in church while prayers for deliverance from the awful visitation are read, to the 25th of October, when the grateful or the survivors join in thanksgiving, every wind alarms the nervous, and every round woolly cloud must contain the white squall. Rachael knew that Nevis boats had turned over when minor squalls dashed down the Narrows between the extreme points of the Islands, and that they were most to be dreaded in the hurricane season. Hamilton's inclination was to spare in every possible way the woman who had sacrificed so much for him, and he asked little urging to idle his days in the cool library with his charming wife and son. Therefore his business suffered, for his partners took advantage of his negligence; and the decay of their fortunes began when Rachael, despite the angry protests of Archibald Hamn, sold her property on St. Kitts and gave Hamilton the money. He withdrew from the firm which had treated him inconsiderately, and set up a business for himself. For a few years he was hopeful, although more than once obliged to borrow money from his wife. She gave freely, for she had been brought up in the careless plenty of the Islands. Mary Fawcett, admirable manager as she was, had been lavish with money, particularly when her favourite child was in question; and Rachael's imagination had never worked toward the fact that money could roll down hill and not roll up again. She was long in discovering that the man she loved and admired was a failure in the uninteresting world of business. He was a brilliant and charming companion, read in the best literatures of the world, a thoughtful and adoring husband. It availed Archibald Hamn nothing to rage or Dr. Hamilton to remonstrate. Rachael gradually learned that Hamilton was not as strong as herself, but the

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maternal instinct, so fully aroused by her child, impelled her to fill out his nature with hers, while denying nothing to the man who did all he could to make her happy.

In the third year Hamilton gave up his sail-boat, and had himself rowed across the Narrows, where the overlooker of a salt estate he had bought awaited him with a horse. Once he would have thought nothing of walking the eight miles to Basseterre, but the Tropics, while they sharpen the nerves, caress unceasingly the indolence of man. During the hurricane season he crossed as often as he thought necessary, for with expert oarsmen there was little danger, even from squalls, and the distance was quickly covered.

Gradually Rachael's position was accepted. Nothing could alter the fact that she was the daughter of Dr. and Mary Fawcett, and Hamilton was of the best blood in the Kingdom. She was spoken of generally as Mistress Hamilton, and old friends of her parents began to greet her pleasantly as she drove about the Island with her beautiful child. In time they called, and from that it was but another step to invite, as a matter of course, the young Hamiltons to their entertainments. After all, Rachael was not the first woman in tropical Great Britain to love a man she could not marry, and it was fatiguing to ask the everlasting question of whether the honesty of a public irregular alliance were not counterbalanced by its dangerous example. It was a day of loose morals, the first fruit of the vast scientific movement of the century, whose last was the French Revolution. Moreover, the James Hamiltons were delightful people, and life on the Islands was a trifle monotonous at times; they brought into Nevis society fresh and unusual personalities, spiced

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with a salient variety. Hamilton might almost be said to have been born an astute man of the world. He opened his doors with an accomplished hospitality to the most intelligent and cultivated people of the Island, ignoring those who based their social pretensions on rank and wealth alone. In consequence he and his wife became the leaders of a small and exclusive set, who appreciated their good fortune. Dr. Hamilton and a few other Kittifonians were constant visitors in this hospitable mansion. Christiana Huggins, who had taken a bold stand from the first, carried her father there one day in triumph, and that austere parent laid down his arms. All seemed well, and the crumbling of the foundations made no sound.

And Alexander? He was an excitable and ingenious imp, who saved himself from many a spanking by his sparkling mind and entrancing sweetness of temper. He might fly at his little slaves and beat them, and to his white playmates he never yielded a point; but they loved him, for he was generous and honest, and the happiest little mortal on the Island. He could get into as towering a rage as old John Fawcett, but he was immediately amenable to the tenderness of his parents.

When he was four years old he was sent to a small school, which happened to be kept by a Jewess. In spite of his precocity his parents had no wish to force a mind which, although delightful to them in its saucy quickness, aroused no ambitious hopes; they sent him to school merely that there might be less opportunity to spoil him at home. His new experience was of a brief duration.

Hamilton on a Sunday was reading to Rachael in the library. Alexander shoved a chair to the table and climbed with some difficulty, for he was very small, to an

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elevated position among the last reviews of Europe. He demanded the attention of his parents, and, clasping his hands behind his back, began to recite rapidly in an unknown tongue. The day was very hot, and he wore nothing but a white apron. His little pink feet were bare on the mahogany, and his fair curls fell over a flushed and earnest face, which at all times was too thin and alert to be angelic or cherubic. Hamilton and Rachael, wondering whom he fancied himself imitating, preserved for a moment a respectful silence, then, overcome by his solemn countenance and the fluency of his outlandish utterance, burst into one of those peals of sudden laughter which seem to strike the most sensitive chord in young children. Alexander shrieked in wrath and terror, and made as if to fling himself on his mother's bosom, then planted his feet with an air of stubborn defiance, and went on with his recital. Hamilton listened a moment longer, then left the house abruptly. He returned in wrath.

"That woman has taught him the Decalogue in Hebrew!" he exclaimed. "'Tis a wonder his brains are not addled. He will sail boats in the swimming-bath and make shell houses in the garden for the next three years. We'll have no more of school."

II.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON had several escapes from imminent peril when he was a boy, and the first occurred in the month of December, 1761. Hamilton had gone to St. Croix on business, and Rachael and the child spent the fortnight of his absence with Christiana Huggins.

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Rachael was accustomed to Hamilton's absences, but Nevis was in a very unhealthy condition, through lack of wind and rains during the preceding autumn. The sea had looked like a metal floor for months, the Island was parched and dry, the swamps on the lowlands were pestiferous. Many negroes had died in Charles Town, and many more were ill. The obeah doctors, with their absurd concoctions and practices, were openly defying the physicians of repute, for the terrified blacks believed that the English had prayed once too often that the hurricane should be stayed, and that he sulked where none might feel his faintest breath. Therefore they cursed the white doctor as futile, and flung his physic from the windows.

Rachael was glad to escape to the heights with Alexander. There it was almost as cool as it should be in December, and she could watch for her husband's sloop. He had gone with the first light wind, and there was enough to bring him home, although with heavy sail. She forgot the muttering negroes and the sickness below. Her servants had been instructed to nurse and nourish where assistance was needed, and up here there was nothing to do but wander with her friend and child through the gay beauty of the terraced garden, or climb the stone steps to the cold quiet depths of the forest.

At the end of a fortnight there was no sign of her husband's sloop, but the wind was strengthening, and she decided to return home and make ready for him. During the long drive she passed negroes in large numbers, either walking toward Charles Town or standing in muttering groups by the roadside. At one time the driveway was so thick with them that her coach could not pass until the postilion laid about him with his whip.

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"This is very odd," she said to her nurse. "I have never seen anything like this before."

"Me no t'ink he nothin'. All go tee tick—oh, dis pic'nee no keep till one minit. Me no t'ink about he 'n de road."

She lifted the child between her face and her mistress's eyes, and Rachael saw that her hand trembled. "Can the negroes be rising?" she wondered; and for a moment she was faint with terror, and prayed for Hamilton's return.

But she was heroic by nature, and quickly recovered her poise. When she arrived at home she sent the nurse to Charles Town on an errand, then went directly to her bedroom which was disconnected from the other rooms, and called her three devoted maids, Rebecca, Flora, and Esther. They came running at the sound of her voice, and she saw at once that they were terrified and ready to cling to her garments.

"What is the matter?" she demanded. "Tell me at once."

"Me no know fo' sure," said Rebecca, "but me t'ink, t'ink, till me yell in me tleep. Somethin' ter'ble go to happen. Me feel he in de air. All de daddys, all de buddys, 'peak, 'peak, togedder all de time, an' look so bad—an' de oby doctors put de curse ebberywheres. Me fine befo' de gate this mornin' one pudden', de mud an' oil an' horsehair, but me no touch he. Me ask all de sissys me know, what comes, but he no 'peak. He run out he tongue, and once he smack me ear. Oh, Mistress, take us back to Sinkitts."

"But do you *know* nothing?"

They shook their heads, but stared at her hopefully,

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for they believed implicitly in her power to adjust all things.

"And my other slaves? Do you think they are faithful to me?"

"All in de town all de time. Me ask ebbery he tell me what comes, and he say 'nothin,' but I no believe he."

"And has the Governor taken no notice?"

"De Gobbenor lord and all de noble Buckras go yis'day to Sinkitts. Take de militia for one gran parade in Bassetarr. Is de birf-day to-morrow de Gobbenor lord de Sinkitts. Up in de Great Houses no hear nothin', an' all quiet on 'states till yes'day. Now comin' to town an' look so bad, so bad!"

"Very well, then, the Governor and the militia must come back. Rebecca, you are the most sensible as well as the weakest in the arms. You will stay here to-night, and you will not falter for a moment. As soon as it is dark Flora and Esther will row me across the channel, and I will send the Buckra's agent on a fast horse with a note to the Governor. If the other house servants return, you will tell them that I am ill and that Flora and Esther are nursing me. You will lock the gates, and open them to no one unless your Buckra should return. Do you understand?"

The slave rolled her eyes, but nodded. She might have defied the Captain-General, but not one of the Fawcetts.

There were two hours before dark. Rachael was conscious of every nerve in her body, and paced up and down the long line of rooms which terminated in the library, until Alexander's legs were worn out trotting after her, and he fell asleep on the floor. Twice she went to the roof to look for Hamilton's sloop, but saw not a sail

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on the sea; and the streets of Charles Town were packed with negroes. England sent no soldiers to protect her Islands, and every free male between boyhood and old age was forced by law to join the militia. It was doubtful if there were a dozen muscular white men on Nevis that night, for the birthday of a Governor was a *fête* of hilarities. Unless the militia returned that night, the blacks, if they really were plotting vengeance, and she knew their superstitions, would have burned every house and cane-field before morning.

The brief twilight passed. The mist rolled down from the heights of Nevis. Rachael, with Alexander in her arms, and followed by her maids, stole along the shore through the thick cocoanut groves, meeting no one. They were far from the town's centre, and all the blacks on the Island seemed to be gathered there. The boat was beached, and it took the combined efforts of the three women to launch it. When they pushed off, the roar of the breakers and the heavy mist covered their flight. But there was another danger, and the very physical strength of the slaves departed before it. They had rowed their mistress about the roadstead before St. Kitts a hundred times, but the close proximity of the reef so terrified them that Rachael was obliged to take the oars; while Flora caught Alexander in so convulsive an embrace that he awoke and protested with all the vigour of his lungs. His mother's voice, to which he was peculiarly susceptible, hushed him, and he held back his own, although the gasping bosom on which he rested did not tend to soothe a nervous child. But there were other ways of expressing outraged feelings, and he kicked like a little steer.

Rachael herself was not too sure of her knowledge of the dangerous channel, although she had crossed it many

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times with Hamilton; and the mist was floating across to St. Kitts. The hollow boom of the reef seemed so close that she expected to hear teeth in the boat every moment, and she knew that far and wide the narrows bristled. She wondered if her hair were turning white, and her straining nerves quivered for a moment with a feminine regret; for she knew the power of her beauty over Hamilton. But her arms kept their strength. Life had taught her to endure more than a half-hour of mortal anxiety.

She reached the shore in safety, and Esther recovered her muscle and agreed to run to the overlooker's house and send him, on his fleetest horse, with her mistress's note to the Governor of Nevis. When the others reached the house, a mile from the Narrows, the man had gone; and Rachael could do no more. The overlooker's wife mulled wine, and the maids were soon asleep. Alexander refused to go to bed, and Rachael, who was not in a disciplinary mood, led him out into the open to watch for the boats of the Governor and his militia. There was no moon; they could cross and land near Hamilton's house and overpower, without discharging a gun, the negroes packed in Charles Town. If the Governor were prompt, the blacks, even had they dispersed to fire the estates, would not have time for havoc; and she knew the tendency of the negro to procrastinate. They did not expect the Governor until late on the following day; they could drink all night and light their torches at dawn when Nevis was heavy in her last sleep. Nevertheless, Rachael watched the Island anxiously.

Fortunately, Alexander possessed an inquiring mind, and she was obliged to answer so many questions that the strain was relieved. They walked amidst a wild and dismal scene. The hills were sterile and black. The

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salt ponds, sunken far below the level of the sea, from lack of rain, glittered white, but they were set with aloes and manchineel, and there were low and muddy flats to be avoided. It was a new aspect of nature to the child who had lived his four years amid the gay luxuriance of tropic verdure, and he was mightily interested. Nevertheless, it was a long hour before the overlooker returned with word that the Governor was on his way to Nevis with the militia of both Islands—for St. Kitts was quiet, its negroes having taken the drouth philosophically—and that her husband was with them. He had arrived at Basseterre as the boats were leaving; as a member of the Governor's staff, he had no choice. He had sent her word, however, not to return to Nevis that night; and Rachael and Alexander went down to the extreme point of the Island and sat there through a cold night of bitter anxiety. With the dawn Hamilton came for them.

The negroes, surprised and overwhelmed, had surrendered without resistance, and before they had left the town. They confessed that their intention had been to murder every white on the Island, seize the ammunition which was stored on the estates, and fire upon the militia as it passed, on the following day. The ringleaders and obeah doctors were either publicly executed or punished with such cruelty that the other malcontents were too cowed to plan another rebellion; and the abundant rains of the following autumn restored their faith in the white man.

III.

When Alexander was five years old, James arrived, an object of much interest to his elder brother, but a

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child of ordinary parts to most beholders. He came during the last days of domestic tranquillity; for it was but a few weeks later that Hamilton was obliged to announce to Rachael that his fortunes, long tottering, had collapsed to their rotten foundations. It was some time before she could accommodate her understanding to the fact that there was nothing left, for even Levine had not dared to lose his money, far less her own; and had she ever given the subject of wealth a thought, she would have assumed that it had roots in certain families which no adverse circumstance could deplace. She had overheard high words between Archibald Hamn and her husband in the library, but Hamilton's casual explanations had satisfied her, and she had always disliked Archibald as a possible stepfather. Dr. Hamilton had frequently looked grave after a conversation with his kinsman, but Rachael was too unpractical to attribute his heavier moods to anything but his advancing years.

When Hamilton made her understand that they were penniless, and that his only means of supporting her was to accept an offer from Peter Lytton to take charge of a cattle estate on St. Croix, Rachael's controlling sensation was dismay that this man whom she had idolised and idealised, who was the forgiven cause of her remarkable son's illegitimacy, was a failure in his competition with other men. Money would come somehow, it always had; but Hamilton dethroned, shoved out of the ranks of planters and merchants, reduced to the status of one of his own overlookers, almost was a new and strange being, and she dared not bid forth her hiding thoughts.

Fortunately the details of moving made life impersonal and commonplace. The three slaves whose future had been the last concern but one of Mary Fawcett, were sent,

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wailing, to Archibald Hamn. Two of the others were retained to wait upon the children, the rest sold with the old mahogany furniture and the library. The Hamiltons set sail for St. Croix on a day in late April. The sympathy of their friends had been expressed in more than one offer of a lucrative position, but Hamilton was intensely proud, and too mortified at his failure to remain obscure among a people who had been delighted to accept his princely and exclusive hospitality. On St. Croix he was almost unknown.

They made the voyage in thirty-two hours, but as the slaves were ill, after the invariable habit of their colour, Rachael had little respite from her baby, or Hamilton from Alexander, whose restless legs and enterprising mind kept him in constant motion; and the day began at five o'clock. There was no opportunity for conversation, and Hamilton was grateful to the miserable mustees. He had the tact to let his wife readjust herself to her damaged idols without weak excuses and a pleading which would have distressed her further, but he was glad to be spared intimate conversation with her.

As they sailed into the bright green waters before Frederikstadt, the sun blazed down upon the white town on the white plain with a vicious energy which Rachael had never seen on Nevis during the hottest and most silent months of the year. She closed her eyes and longed for the cool shallows of the harbour, and even Alexander ceased to watch the flying-fish dart like silver blades over the water, and was glad to be stowed comfortably into one of the little deck-houses. As for the slaves, weakened by illness, they wept and refused to gather themselves together.

But Rachael's soul, which had felt faint for many

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days, rose triumphant in the face of this last affliction. Like all West Indians, she hated extreme heat, and during those months on her own Islands when the trades hibernated, rarely left the house. She remembered little of St. Croix. Her imagination had disassociated itself from all connected with it, but now it burst into hideous activity and pictured interminable years of scorching heat and blinding glare. For a moment she descended to the verge of hysteria, from which she struggled with so mighty an effort that it vitalised her spirit for the ordeal of her new life; and when Hamilton, cursing himself, came to assist her to land, she was able to remark that she recalled the beauty of Christianstadt, and to anathematise her sea-green maids.

The trail of Spain is over all the islands, and on St. Croix has left its picturesque mark in the heavy arcades which front the houses in the towns. Behind these arcades one can pass from street to street with brief egress into the awful downpour of the sun, and they give to both towns an effect of architectural beauty. At that time palms and cocoanuts grew in profusion along the streets of Frederikstadt and in the gardens, tempering the glare of the sun on the coral.

Peter Lytton's coach awaited the Hamiltons, and at six o'clock they started for their new home. The long driveway across the Island was set with royal palms, beyond which rolled vast fields of cane. St. Croix was approaching the height of her prosperity, and almost every inch of her fertile acres was under cultivation. They rolled up and over every hill, the heavy stone houses, with their negro hamlets and mills, rising like half-submerged islands, unless they crowned a height. The roads swarmed with Africans, who bowed profoundly to the strangers in the

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fine coach, grinning an amiable welcome. Surrounded by so generous a suggestion of hospitality and plenty, with the sun low in the west, the spirits of the travellers rose, and Rachael thought with more composure upon the morrow's encounter with her elder sisters. She knew them very slightly, their husbands less. When her connection with Hamilton began, correspondence between them had ceased; but like others they had accepted the relation, and for the last three years Hamilton had been a welcome guest at their houses when business took him to St. Croix. Mrs. Lytton had been the first to whom he had confided his impending failure, and she, remembering her mother's last letter and profoundly pitying the young sister who seemed marked for misfortune, had persuaded her husband to offer Hamilton the management of his grazing estates on the eastern end of the Island. She wrote to Rachael, assuring her of welcome, and reminding her that her story was unknown on St. Croix, that she would be accepted without question as Hamilton's wife and their sister. But Rachael knew that the truth would come out as soon as they had attracted the attention of their neighbours, and she had seen enough of the world to be sure that what people tolerated in the wealthy they censured in the unimportant. To depend upon her sisters' protection instead of her own lifelong distinction, galled her proud spirit. For the first time she understood how powerless Hamilton was to protect her. The glamour of that first year when nothing mattered was gone for ever. She had two children, one of them uncommon, and they were to encounter life without name or property. True, Levine might die, or Hamilton make some brilliant coup, but she felt little of the buoyancy of hope as they left the canefields and drove among the dark hills to their new home.

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The house and outbuildings were on a high eminence, surrounded on three sides by hills. Below was a lagoon, which was separated from the sea by a deep interval of tidal mud set thick with mangroves. The outlet through this swamp was so narrow that a shark which had found its way in when young had grown too large to return whence he came, and was the solitary and discontented inhabitant of the lagoon. The next morning Rachael, rising early and walking on the terrace with Alexander, was horrified to observe him warming his white belly in the sun. On three sides of the lagoon was a thick grove of manchineels, hung with their deadly apples; here and there a palm, which drooped as if in discord with its neighbours. It was an uncheerful place for a woman with terror and tumult in her soul, but the house was large and had been made comfortable by her brother-in-law's slaves.

Mrs. Lytton and Mrs. Mitchell drove over for the eleven o'clock breakfast. They were very kind, but they were many years older than the youngest of their family, proudly conscious of their virtue, uncomprehending of the emotions which had nearly wrenched Rachael's soul from her body more than once. Moreover, Mrs. Mitchell was the physical image of Mary Fawcett without the inheritance of so much as the old lady's temper; and there were moments, as she sat chattering amiably with Alexander, with whom she immediately fell in love, when Rachael could have flown at and throttled her because she was not her mother. Mrs. Lytton was delicate and nervous, but more reserved, and Rachael liked her better. Nevertheless, she was heartily glad to be rid of both of them, and reflected with satisfaction that she was to live on the most isolated part of the Island. She had begged them to ask

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no one to call, and for months she saw little of anybody except her family.

Her household duties were many, and she was forced at once to alter her lifelong relation to domestic economics. Hamilton's salary was six hundred pieces of eight, and for a time the keeping of accounts and the plans for daily disposal of the small income furnished almost the only subjects of conversation between her husband and herself. His duties kept him on horseback during all but the intolerable hours of the day, and until their new life had become a commonplace they were fortunate in seeing little of each other.

Alexander long since had upset his father's purpose to defer the opening of his mind until the age of seven. He had taught himself the rudiments of education by such ceaseless questioning of both his parents that they were glad to set him a daily task and keep him at it as long as possible. In this new home he had few resources besides his little books and his mother, who gave him all her leisure. There were no white playmates, and he was not allowed to go near the lagoon, lest the shark get him or he eat of forbidden fruit. Just after his sixth birthday, however, several changes occurred in his life: Peter Lytton sent him a pony, his father killed the shark and gave him a boat, and he made the acquaintance of the Rev. Hugh Knox.

This man, who was to play so important a part in the life of Alexander Hamilton, was himself a personality. At this time but little over thirty, he had, some years since, come to the West Indies with a classical library and a determination to rescue the planters from that hell which awaits those who drowse through life in a clime where it is always summer when it is not simply and blazingly

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West Indian. He soon threw the mantle of charity over the patient planters, and became the boon companion of many; but he made converts and was mightily proud of them. His was the zeal of the converted. When he arrived in the United States, in 1753, young, fresh from college, enthusiastic, and handsome, he found favour at once in the eyes of the Rev. Dr. Rogers of Middletown on the Delaware, to whom he had brought a letter of introduction. Through the influence of this eminent divine, he obtained a school and many friends. The big witty Irishman was a welcome guest at the popular tavern, and was not long establishing himself as the leader of its hilarities. He was a peculiarly good mimic, and on Saturday nights his boon companions fell into the habit of demanding his impersonation of some character locally famous. One night he essayed a reproduction of Dr. Rogers, then one of the most celebrated men of his cloth. Knox rehearsed the sermon of the previous Sunday, not only with all the divine's peculiarity of gesture and inflection, but almost word for word; for his memory was remarkable. At the start his listeners applauded violently, then subsided into the respectful silence they were wont to accord Dr. Rogers; at the finish they stole out without a word. As for Knox, he sat alone, overwhelmed with the powerful sermon he had repeated, and by remorse for his own attempted levity. His emotional Celtic nature was deeply impressed. A few days later he disappeared, and was not heard of again until, some months after, Dr. Rogers learned that he was the guest of the Rev. Aaron Burr at Newark, and studying for the church. He was ordained in due course, converted his old companions, then set sail for St. Croix.

Hamilton met him at Peter Lytton's, talked with him

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the day through, and carried him home to dinner. After that he became little less than an inmate of the household; a room was furnished for him, and when he did not occupy it, he rode over several times a week. His books littered every table and shelf.

Alexander was his idol, and he was the first to see that the boy was something more than brilliant. Hamilton had accepted his son's cleverness as a matter of course, and Rachael, having a keen contempt for fatuous mothers, hardly had dared admit to herself that her son was to other boys as a star to pebbles. When Knox, who had undertaken his education at once, assured her that he must distinguish himself if he lived, probably in letters, life felt almost fresh again, although she regretted his handicap the more bitterly. As for Knox, his patience was inexhaustible. Alexander would have everything resolved into its elements, and was merciless in his demand for information, no matter what the thermometer. He had no playmates until he was nine, and by that time he had much else to sober him. Of the ordinary pleasures of childhood he had scant knowledge.

Rachael wondered at the invariable sunniness of his nature,—save when he flew into a rage,—for under the buoyancy of her own had always been a certain melancholy. Before his birth she had gone to the extremes of happiness and grief, her normal relation to life almost forgotten. But the sharpened nerves of the child manifested themselves in acute sensibilities and an extraordinary precocity of intellect, never in morbid or irritable moods. He was excitable, and had a high and sometimes furious temper, but even his habit of study never extinguished his gay and lively spirits. On the other hand, beneath the surface sparkle of his mind was a British ruggedness and

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tenacity, and a stubborn oneness of purpose, whatever might be the object, with which no lighter mood interfered. All this Rachael lived long enough to discover and find compensation in, and as she mastered the duties of her new life she companioned the boy more and more. James was a good but uninteresting baby, who made few demands upon her, and was satisfied with his nurse. She never pretended to herself that she loved him as she did Alexander, for aside from the personality of her first-born, he was the symbol and manifest of her deepest living.

Although Rachael was monotonously conscious of the iron that had impaled her soul, she was not quite unhappy at this time, and she never ceased to love Hamilton. Whatever his lacks and failures, nothing could destroy his fascination as a man. His love for her, although tranquillised by time, was still strong enough to keep alive his desire to please her, and he thought of her as his wife always. He felt the change in her, and his soul rebelled bitterly at the destruction of his pedestal and halo, and all that fiction had meant to both of them; but he respected her reserve, and the subject never came up between them. He knew that she never would love anyone else, that she still loved him passionately, despite the shattered ideal of him; and he consoled himself with the reflection that even in giving him less than her entire store, she gave him, merely by being herself, more than he had thought to find in any woman. His courteous attentions to her had never relaxed, and in time the old companionship was resumed; they read and discussed as in their other home; but this time their little circle was widened by two, Alexander and Hugh Knox. The uninterrupted intimacy of their first years was not to be resumed.

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They saw little of the society of St. Croix. In 1763 Christiana Huggins, visiting the Peter Lyttons, married her host's brother, James, and settled on the Island. She drove occasionally to the lonely estate in the east, but she had a succession of children and little time for old duties. Rachael exchanged calls at long intervals with her sisters and their intimate friends, the Yards, Lillies, Crugers, Stevens, Langs, and Goodchilds, but she had been too great a lady to strive now for social position, practically dependent as she was on the charity of her relatives.

IV.

In the third year of their life on St. Croix, Rachael discovered that Peter Lytton was dissatisfied with Hamilton, and retained him to his own detriment, out of sympathy for herself and her children. From that time she had few tranquil moments. It was as if, like the timid in the hurricane season, she sat constantly with ears strained for that first loud roar in the east. She realised then that the sort of upheaval which shatters one's economic life is but the precursor of other upheavals, and she thought on the unknown future until her strong soul was faint again.

Hamilton was one of those men whose gifts are ruined by their impulses, in whom the cultivation of sober judgment is interrupted by the excesses of a too sanguine temperament. He was honourable, and always willing to admit his mistakes, but years and repeated failure did little toward balancing his faults and virtues. In time he wore out the patience of even those who loved and admired him. His wife remained his one loyal and unswerving friend, but her part in his life was near its finish. The day came

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when Peter Lytton, exasperated once too often, after an ill-considered sale of valuable stock, let fly his temper, and further acceptance of his favour was out of the question. Hamilton, after a scene with his wife, in which his agony and remorse quickened all the finest passions in her own nature, sailed for the Island of St. Vincent, in the hope of finding employment with one of his former business connections. He had no choice but to leave his wife and children dependent upon her relatives until he could send for them; and a week later Rachael was forced to move to Peter Lytton's.

Her brother-in-law's house was very large. She was given an upstairs wing of it and treated with much consideration, but this final ignominy broke her haughty spirit, and she lost interest in herself. She was thankful that her children were not to grow up in want, that Alexander was able to continue his studies with Hugh Knox. He was beyond her now in everything but French, in which they read and talked together daily. She also discussed constantly with him those heroes of history distinguished not only for great achievements, but for sternest honour. She dreamed of his future greatness, and sometimes of her part in it. But her inner life was swathed like a mummy.

To Alexander the change would have been welcome had he understood his mother less. But the ordinary bright boy of nine is acute and observing, and this boy of Rachael's, with his extraordinary intuitions, his unboyish brain, his sympathetic and profound affection for his mother, felt with her and criticised his father severely. To him failure was incomprehensible, then, as later, for self-confidence and indomitability were parts of his equipment; and that a man of his father's age and experience, to say nothing of his education and intellect, should so

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fail in the common relation of life, and break the heart and pride of the uncommonest of women, filled him with a deep disappointment, which, no doubt, was the first step toward the early loss of certain illusions.

Otherwise his life was vastly improved. He soon became intimate with boys of neighbouring estates, Edward and Thomas Stevens, and Benjamin Yard, and for a time they all studied together under Hugh Knox. At first there was discord, for Alexander would have led a host of cherubims or had naught to do with them, and these boys were clever and spirited. There were fights of word and fist in the lee of Mr. Lytton's barn, where interference was unlikely; but the three succumbed speedily, not alone to the powerful magnetism in little Hamilton's mind, and to his active fists, but because he invariably excited passionate attachment, unless he encountered jealous hate. When his popularity with these boys was established they adored the very blaze of his temper, and when he formed them into a soldier company and marched them up and down the palm avenue for a morning at a time, they never murmured, although they were like to die of the heat and unaccustomed exertion. Neddy Stevens, who resembled him somewhat in face, was the closest of these boyhood friends.

Alexander was a great favourite with Mr. Lytton, who took him to ride every morning; Mrs. Lytton preferred James, who was a comfortable child to nurse; but Mrs. Mitchell was the declared slave of her lively nephew, and sent her coach for him on Saturday mornings. As for Hugh Knox, he never ceased to whittle at the boy's ambition and point it toward a great place in modern letters. Had he been born with less sound sense and a less watchful mother, it is appalling to think what a brat he would

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have been; but as it was, the spoiling but fostered a self-confidence which was half the battle in after years.

Hamilton never returned. His letters to his wife spoke always of the happiness of their final reunion, of belief in the future. His brothers had sent him money, and he hoped they would help him to recover his fortunes. But two years passed and he was still existing on a small salary, his hopes and his impassioned tenderness were stereotyped. Rachael's experience with Hamilton had developed her insight. She knew that man requires woman to look after her own fuel. If she cannot, he may carry through life the perfume of a sentiment, and a tender regret, but it grows easy and more easy to live without her. It was a long while before she forced her penetrating vision round to the certainty that she never should see Hamilton again, and then she realised how strong hope had been, that her interest in herself was not dead, that her love must remain quick through interminable years of monotony and humiliation. For a time she was so alive that she went close to killing herself, but she fought it out as she had fought through other desperate crises, and wrenched herself free of her youth, to live for the time when her son's genius should lift him so high among the immortals that his birth would matter as little as her own hours of agony. But the strength that carried her triumphantly through that battle was fed by the last of her vitality, and it was not long before she knew that she must die.

Alexander knew it first. The change in his mother was so sudden, the earthen hue of her white skin, the dimming of her splendid eyes, spoke so unmistakably of some strange collapse of the vital forces, that it seemed to the boy who worshipped her as if all the noises of the

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Universe were shrieking his anguish. At the same time he fought for an impassive exterior, then bolted from the house and rode across the Island for a doctor. The man came, prescribed for a megrim, and Alexander did not call him again; nor did he mention his mother's condition to the rest of the family. She was in the habit of remaining in her rooms for weeks at a time, and she had her own attendants. Mrs. Lytton was an invalid, and Peter Lytton, while ready to give of his bounty to his wife's sister, had too little in common with Rachael to seek her companionship. Alexander felt the presence of death too surely to hope, and was determined to have his mother to himself during the time that remained. He confided in Hugh Knox, then barely left the apartments.

Just before her collapse Rachael was still a beautiful woman. She was only thirty-two when she died. Her face, except when she forced her brain to activity, was sad and worn, but the mobile beauty of the features was unimpaired, and her eyes were luminous, even at their darkest. Her head was always proudly erect, and nature had given her a grace and a dash which survived broken fortunes and the death of her coquetry. No doubt this is the impression of her which Alexander carried through life, for those last two months passed to the sound of falling ruins, on which he was too sensible to dwell when they had gone into the control of his will.

After she had admitted to Alexander that she understood her condition, they seldom alluded to the subject, although their conversation was as rarely impersonal. The house stood high, and Rachael's windows commanded one of the most charming views on the Island. Below was the green valley, with the turbaned women moving among the cane, then the long white road with its splendid setting of

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royal palms, winding past a hill with groves of palms, marble fountains and statues, terraces covered with hibiscus and orchid, and another Great House on its summit. Far to the right, through an opening in the hills, was a glimpse of the sea.

Rachael lay on a couch in a little balcony during much of the soft winter day, and talked to Alexander of her mother and her youth, finally of his father, touching lightly on the almost forgotten episode with Levine. All that she did not say his creative brain divined, and when she told him what he had long suspected, that his mother's name was unknown to the Hamiltons of Grange, he accepted the fact as but one more obstacle to be overthrown in the battle with life which he had long known he was to fight unaided. To criticise his mother never occurred to him; her control of his heart and imagination was too absolute. His only regret was that she could not live until he was able to justify her. The audacity and boldness of his nature were stimulated by the prospect of this sharp battle with the world's most cherished convention, and he was fully aware of all that he owed to his mother. When he told her this she said:—

"I regret nothing, even though it has brought me to this. In the first place, it is not in me to do anything so futile. In the second place, I have been permitted to live in every part of my nature, and how many women can say that? In the third, you are in the world, and if I could live I should see you the honoured of all men. I die with regret because you need me for many years to come, and I have suffered so much that I never could suffer again. Remember always that you are to be a great man, not merely a successful one. Your mind and your will are capable of all things. Never try for the second best, and

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that means to put your immediate personal desire aside when it encounters one of the ideals of your time. Unless you identify yourself with the great principles of the world you will be a failure, because your mind is created in harmony with them, and if you use it for smaller purposes it will fail as surely as if it tried to lie or steal. Your passions are violent, and you have a blackness of hate in you which will ruin you or others according to the control you acquire over it; so be warned. But you never can fail through any of the ordinary defects of character. You are too bold and independent to lie, even if you had been born with any such disposition; you are honourable and tactful, and there is as little doubt of your fascination and your power over others. But remember—use all these great forces when your ambition is hottest, then you can stumble upon no second place. As for your heart, it will control your head sometimes, but your insatiable brain will accomplish so much that it can afford to lose occasionally; and the warmth of your nature will make you so many friends, that I draw from it more strength to die than from all your other gifts. Leave this Island as soon as you can. Ah, if I could give you but a few thousands to force the first doors!"

She died on the 25th of February, 1768. Her condition had been known for some days, and her sisters had shed many tears, aghast and deeply impressed at the tragic fate of this youngest, strangest, and most gifted of their father's children. Unconsciously they had expected her to do something extraordinary, and it was yet too soon to realise that she had. His aunts had announced far and wide that Alexander was the brightest boy on the Island, but that a nation lay folded in his saucy audacious brain they hardly could be expected to know.

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V.

THE Great House of Peter Lytton was hung with white from top to bottom, and every piece of furniture looked as if the cold wing of death had touched it. A white satin gown, which had come from London for Rachael six years before,—just too late, for she never went to a ball again,—was taken from her mahogany press and wrapped about her wasted body. Her magnificent hair was put out of sight in a cap of blond lace.

The fashionable world of St. Croix, which had seen little of Rachael in life, came to the ceremonious exit of her body. They sat along the four sides of the large drawing-room, looking like a black dado against the white walls, and the Rev. Cecil Wray Goodchild, the pastor of the larger number of that sombre flock, sonorously read the prayers for the dead. Hugh Knox felt that his was the right to perform that ceremony; but he was a Presbyterian, and Peter Lytton was not one of his converts. He was there, however, and so were several Danes, whose colourless faces and heads completed the symbolisation encircling the coffin. People of Nevis, St. Christopher, and St. Croix were there, the sisters born of the same mother, a kinsman of Hamilton's, himself named James Hamilton, these bleached people of the North, whose faces, virtuous as they were, would have seemed to the dead woman to shed the malignant aura of Levine's,—and the boy for whom the sacrificial body had been lain on the altar. He paid his debt in wretchedness then and there, and stood by the black pall which covered his mother, feeling a hundred years older than the brother who sat demurely on Mrs. Lytton's agitated lap.

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When Mr. Goodchild closed his book, the slave-women entered with silver pitchers containing mulled wines, porter mixed with sugar and spice, madeira, and port wine. Heaped high on silver salvers were pastries and "dyer bread," wrapped in white paper sealed with black wax. The guests refreshed themselves deeply, then followed the coffin, which was borne on the shoulders of the dead woman's brothers and their closest friends, across the valley to the private burying-ground of the Lyttons. Old James Lytton was placed beside her in the following year, and ten years later a child of Christiana Huggins, the wife of his son. The cane grows above their graves to-day.

VI.

ALEXANDER went home with Mrs. Mitchell, and it was long before he returned to Peter Lytton's. His favourite aunt was delighted to get him, and her husband, for whom Alexander had no love, was shortly to sail on one of his frequent voyages.

Mrs. Mitchell had a winter home in Christianstadt, for she loved the gay life of the little capital, and her large house, on the corner of King and Strand streets, was opened almost as often as Government House. This pile, with its imposing façade, represented to her the fulfilment of worldly ambitions and splendour. There was nothing to compare with it on Nevis or St. Kitts, nor yet on St. Thomas; and her imagination or memory gave her nothing in Europe to rival it. When Government House was closed she felt as if the world were eating bread and cheese. The Danes were not only the easiest and most

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generous of rulers, but they entertained with a royal contempt of pieces of eight, and their adopted children had neither the excuse nor the desire to return to their native isles.

Christianstadt, although rising straight from the harbour, has the picturesque effect of a high mountain-village. As the road across the Island finds its termination in King Street, the perceptible decline and the surrounding hills, curving in a crescent to the unseen shore a mile away, create the illusion. On the left the town straggles away in an irregular quarter for the poor, set thick with groves of cocoanut and palm. On the right, and parallel with the main road, is Company Street, and above is the mountain studded with great white stone houses, softened by the lofty roofs of the royal palm. All along King Street the massive houses stand close together, each with its arcade and its curious outside staircase of stone which leads to an upper balcony where one may catch the breeze and watch the leisures of tropic life. Almost every house has a court opening into a yard surrounded by the overhanging balconies of three sides of the building; and here the guinea fowl screech their matins, the roosters crow all night, there is always a negro asleep under a cocoanut-tree, and a flame of colour from potted plants.

Down by the sea is the red fort, built on a bluff, and commanding a harbour beautiful to look upon, with its wooded island, its sharp high points, its sombre swamps covered with lacing mangroves, but locked from all the world but that which can come in sailing ships, by the coral reef on which so many craft have gone to pieces.

From Alexander's high windows in Thomas Mitchell's house, he could see the lively Park behind the Fort; the

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boats sail over from the blue peaks of St. Thomas and St. John, the long white line of the sounding reef. Above the walls of Government House was the high bold curve of the mountain with its dazzling façades, its glitter of green. In the King Street of that day gentlemen in knee breeches and lace shirts, their hair in a powdered queue, were as familiar objects as turbaned blacks and Danes in uniform. After riding over their plantations "to hear the cane grow," they almost invariably brought up in town to talk over prospects with the merchants, or to meet each other at some more jovial resort. Sometimes they came clattering down the long road in a coach and four, postilions shouting at the pic'nees in the road, swerving, and halting so suddenly in some courtyard, that only a planter, accustomed to this emotional method of travel, could keep his seat. Ordinarily he preferred his horse, perhaps because it told no tales.

Thomas Mitchell had made his large fortune in the traffic of slaves, and was on terms of doubtful courtesy with Peter Lytton, who disapproved the industry. Blacks were by no means his only source of revenue; he had one of the two large general stores of the Island—the other was Nicholas Cruger's—and plantations of cane, whose yield in sugar, molasses, and rum never failed him. He was not a pleasing man in his family, and did not extend the hospitality of its roof to Alexander with a spontaneous warmth. His own children were married, and he did not look back upon the era of mischievous boys with sufficient enthusiasm to prompt him to adopt another. He yielded to his wife's voluble supplications because domestic harmony was necessary to his content, and Mistress Mitchell had her ways of upsetting it. Alexander was

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immediately too busy with his studies to pay attention to the indifferent grace with which Mr. Mitchell accepted his lot, and, fortunately, this industrious merchant was much away from home. Hugh Knox, as the surest means of diverting the boy from his grief, put him at his books the day after he arrived in Christianstadt. His own house was on Company Street, near the woods out of which the town seemed to spring; and in his cool library he gathered his boys daily, and crammed their brains with Latin and mathematics. The boys had met at Peter Lytton's before, but Knox easily persuaded them to the new arrangement, which was as grateful to him—he was newly married—as to Alexander. When the lessons were over he gave his favourite pupil a book and an easy-chair, or made experiments in chemistry with him until it was cool enough to ride or row. In the evening Alexander had his difficult lessons to prepare, and when he tumbled into bed at midnight he was too healthy not to sleep soundly. He spent two days of every week with his friend Ned Stevens, on a plantation where there were lively people and many horses. Gradually the heaviness of his grief sank of its weight, the buoyancy and vivacity of his mind were released, the eager sparkle returned to his eyes. He did not cease to regret his mother, nor passionately to worship her memory; but he was young, the future was an unresting magnet to his ambitious mind, devoted friends did their utmost, and his fine strong brain, eager for novelty and knowledge, opened to new impressions, closed with inherent philosophy to what was beyond recall. So passed Rachael Levine.

A year later his second trial befell him. Ned Stevens, the adored, set sail for New Nork to complete his educa-

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tion at King's College. Alexander strained his eyes after the sails of the ship for an hour, then burst unceremoniously into the presence of Hugh Knox.

"Tell me quick," he exclaimed; "how can I make two thousand pieces of eight? I must go to college. Why didn't my uncles send me with Neddy? He had no wish to go. He swore all day yesterday at the prospect of six years of hard work and no more excuses for laziness. I am wild to go. Why could it not have been I?"

"That's a curious way the world has, and you'll be too big a philosopher in a few years to ask questions like that. If you want the truth, I've wrangled with Peter Lytton,—it's no use appealing to Tom Mitchell,—but he's a bit close, as you know, when it actually comes to putting his hand in his pocket. He didn't send any of his own sons to New York or England, and never could see why anyone else did. Schooling, of course, and he always had a tutor and a governess out from England; but what the devil does a planter want of a college education? I argued that I couldn't for the life of me see the makings of a planter in you, but that by fishing industriously among your intellects I'd found a certain amount of respectable talent, and I thought it needed more training than I could give it; that I was nearing the end of my rope, in fact. Then he asked me what a little fellow like you would do with a college education after you got it, for he couldn't stand the idea of you trying to earn your living in a foreign city, where there was ice and snow on the ground in winter; and when I suggested that you might stay on in the college and teach, if you were afraid of being run over or frozen to death in the street, he said there was no choice between a miserable

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teacher's life and a planter's, and he'd leave you enough land to start you in life. I cursed like a planter, and left the house. But he loves you, and if you plead with him he might give way."

"I'd do anything else under heaven that was reasonable to get to New York but ask any man for money. Peter Lytton knows that I want learning more than all the other boys on this island; and if I'm little, I've broken in most of his colts and have never hesitated to fight. He finds his pathos in his purse. Why can't I make two thousand pieces of eight?"

"You'd be so long at it, poor child, that it would be too late to enter college; for there's a long apprenticeship to serve before you get a salary. But you must go. I've thought, thought about it, and I'll think more." He almost wished he had not married; but as he had no other cause to regret his venture, even his interest in young Hamilton did not urge him to deprive his little family of the luxuries so necessary in the West Indies. Economy on his salary would mean a small house instead of large rooms where one could forget the heat; curtailment of the voluminous linen wardrobes so soon demolished on the stones of the river; surrender of coach and horses. He trusted to a moment of sudden insight on the part of Peter Lytton, assisted by his own eloquent argument; and his belief in Alexander's destiny never wavered. Once he approached Mrs. Mitchell, for he knew she had money of her own; but, as he had expected, she went into immediate hysterics at the suggestion to part with her idol, and he hastily retreated.

Alexander turned over every scheme of making money his fertile brain conceived, and went so far as to ask his aunt to send him to New York, where he could work in

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one of the West Indian houses, and attend college by some special arrangement. He, too, retreated before Mrs. Mitchell's agitation, but during the summer another cause drove him to work, and without immediate reference to the wider education.

Mr. Mitchell was laid up with the gout and spent the summer on his plantation. His slaves fled at the sound of his voice, his wife wept incessantly at this the heaviest of her life's trials, and it was not long before Alexander was made to feel his dependence so keenly by the irascible planter that he leaped on his horse one day and galloped five miles under the hot sun to Lytton's Fancy.

"I want to work," he announced, with his usual breathless impetuosity when excited, bursting in upon Mr. Lytton, who was mopping his face after his siesta. "Put me at anything. I don't care what, except in Uncle Mitchell's store. I won't work for him."

Mr. Lytton laughed with some satisfaction. "So you two have come to loggerheads? Tom Mitchell, well, is insufferable. With gout in him he must bristle with every damnable trait in the human category. Come back and live with me," he added, in a sudden burst of sympathy, for the body looked hot and tired and dejected; and his diminutive size appealed always to Peter Lytton, who was six feet two. "You're a fine little chap, but I doubt you're strong enough for hard work, and you love your books. Come here and read all day if you like. When you're grown I'll make you manager of all my estates. Gad! I'd be glad of an honest one! The last time I went to England, that devil, Tom Collins, drank every bottle of my best port, smashed my furniture, broke the wind of every horse I had, and kept open house for every scamp and loafer on the Island, or that came to port. How old

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are you—twelve? I'll turn everything over to you in three years. You've more sense now than any boy I ever saw. Three years hence, if you continue to improve, you'll be a man, and I'll be only too glad to put the whole thing in your hands."

Alexander struggled with an impulse to ask his uncle to send him to college, but not only did pride strike at the words, but he reflected with some cynicism that the affection he inspired invariably expressed itself in blatant selfishness, and that he might better appeal to the enemies he had made to send him from the Island. He shook his head.

"I'll remain idle no longer," he said. "I'm tired of eating bread that's given me. I'd rather eat yours than his, but I've made up my mind to work. What can you find for me now?"

"You are too obstinate to argue with in August. Cruger wants a reliable clerk. I heard him say so yesterday. He'll take you if I say the word, and give you a little something in the way of salary."

"I like Mr. Cruger," said Alexander, eagerly, "and so did my mother."

"He's a kind chap, but he'll work you to death, for he's always in a funk that Tom Mitchell'll get ahead of him. But you cannot do better. I have no house in town, but you can ride the distance between here and Christianstadt night and morning, if my estimable brother-in-law—whom may the gout convince of his sins—is too much for you."

But Alexander had no desire to return to the house where he had passed those last terrible weeks with his mother, and Mrs. Mitchell begged him on her knees to forgive the invalid, and sent him to the house in Christian-

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stadt, where he would be alone until December; by that time, please God, Tom Mitchell would be on his way to Jamaica. But Alexander had little further trouble with that personage. Mr. Mitchell had his susceptibilities; he was charmed with a boy of twelve who was too proud to accept the charity of wealthy relatives and determined to make his living. Alexander entered Mr. Cruger's store in October. Mr. Mitchell did not leave the Island again until the following spring, and moved to town in November. He and Alexander discussed the prospects of rum, molasses, and sugar, the price of mahogany, of oats, cheese, bread, and flour, the various Island and American markets, until Mrs. Mitchell left the table. Her husband proudly told his acquaintance that his nephew, Alexander Hamilton, was destined to become the cleverest merchant in the Caribbees.

VII.

But Alexander had small liking for his employment. He had as much affinity with the sordid routine of a general store and counting-house as Tom Mitchell had with the angels. But pride and ambition carried him through most of the distasteful experiences of his life. He would come short in nothing, and at that tender age, when his relatives were prepared to forgive his failures with good-humoured tact, he was willing to sacrifice even his books to clerical success. He soon discovered that he had that order of mind which concentrates without effort upon whatever demands its powers,—masters the detail of it with incredible swiftness. At first he was a general clerk, and attended to the loading and unloading of Mr.

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Cruger's sloops; after a time he was made bookkeeper; it was not long before he was in charge of the counting-house. He got back to his books in time—for business in the Islands finishes at four o'clock—and when he had learned all the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and mathematics Hugh Knox could teach him, he spent his leisure hours with Pope, Plutarch, Shakespeare, Milton, Plato, and the few other English poets and works of Greek philosophers which Knox possessed, as well as several abridged histories of England and Europe. These interested him more than aught else, purely literary as his proclivities were supposed to be, and he read and reread them, and longed for some huge work in twenty volumes which should reveal Europe to his searching vision. But this was when he was fourteen, and had almost forgotten what the life of a mere boy was like. Shortly after he entered Mr. Cruger's store he wrote his famous letter to young Stevens. It will bear republication here, and its stilted tone, so different from the concise simplicity of his business letters, was no doubt designed to produce an effect on the mind of his more fortunate friend. He became a master of style, and before he was twenty; but there is small indication of the achievement in this letter, lovable as it is:

ST. CROIX, November 11, 1769.

DEAR EDWARD, This serves to acknowledge the receipt of yours per Capt. Lowndes, which was delivered me yesterday. The truth of Capt. Lightbowen and Lowndes' information is now verified by the presence of your father and sister, for whose safe arrival I pray, and that they may convey that satisfaction to your soul, that must naturally flow from the sight of absent friends in health; and shall for news this way, refer you to them.

As to what you say, respecting your soon having the happiness of seeing us all, I wish for an accomplishment of your hopes, provided they are concomitant with your welfare, otherwise not; though

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doubt whether I shall be present or not, for to confess my weakness, Ned, my ambition is prevalent, so that I contemn the grovelling condition of a clerk, or the like, to which my fortune condemns me, and would willingly risk my life, though not my character, to exalt my station. I am confident, Ned, that my youth excludes me from any hopes of immediate preferment, nor do I desire it; but I mean to prepare the way for futurity. I'm no philosopher, you see, and may be justly said to build castles in the air; my folly makes me ashamed, and beg you'll conceal it; yet, Neddy, we have seen such schemes successful, when the projector is constant. I shall conclude by saying I wish there was a war.

I am, Dear Edward, Yours

ALEX. HAMILTON.

P.S. I this moment received yours by William Smith, and pleased to see you give such close application to study.

He hoped that in time Mr. Cruger would find it necessary to send him to New York; but his employer found him too useful on St. Croix, and recognised his abilities, not to the extent of advancing his intellectual interests, but of taxing and developing his capacity for business and its heavy responsibilities. In the following year he placed him in temporary charge of his branch house, in Frederickstadt, and Alexander never wished for war so desperately as when he stood under the arcade on Bay Street and stared out at the shallow green roadstead and the illimitable ocean beyond. Frederickstadt was a hamlet compared to Christianstadt, and unredeemed—the arcades excepting—by any of the capital's architectural or natural beauty. Alexander believed it to be the hottest, dullest, and most depressing spot on either hemisphere. The merchants and other residents were astonished that Nicolas Cruger should send a lad of thirteen to represent him in matters which involved large sums of money, but they recognised young Hamilton's ability even while they stared with some rudeness at the small figure in white

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linen, and the keen but very boyish face. When they passed him under the arcades, and asked him what ship he expected to heave in sight, he was tempted to say a man-of-war, but had no mind to reveal himself to the indifferent. He read from sundown until midnight or later, by the light of two long candles protected from draughts and insects by curving glass chimneys. Mosquitoes tormented him and cockroaches as long as his hand ran over the table; occasionally a land-crab rattled across the room, or a centipede appeared on the open page. But he was accustomed to these embellishments of tropic life, and although he anathematised them and the heat, he went on with his studies. It was about this time that he began to indulge in literary composition; and although less gifted boys than Alexander Hamilton struggle through this phase of mental development as their body runs the gamut of juvenile complaints, still it may be that had not his enormous energies been demanded in their entirety by a country in the terrible straits of rebirth, or had he dwelt on earth twenty years longer, he would have realised the ambitions of his mother and Hugh Knox, and become one of the greatest literary forces the world has had. But although this exercise of his restless faculties gave him pleasure, it was far from satisfying him, even then. He wanted the knowledge that was locked up in vast libraries far beyond that blinding stretch of sea, and he wanted action, and a sight of and a part in the great world. Meanwhile, he read every book he could find on the Island, made no mistakes in Mr. Cruger's counting-house, and stood dreaming under the arcade for hours at a time, muttering his thoughts, his mobile features expressing the ceaseless action of his brain.

Some time during the previous year Peter Levine had

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returned to St. Croix for his health, and he remained with relatives for some time. He and Alexander met occassionally and were friendly. As he was a decent little chap our hero forgave him his paternity, although he never could quite assimilate the fact that he was his mother's child.

Alexander returned, after six months of Frederickstadt, to the East End of the Island. A few months later, Mr. Cruger, whose health had failed, went to New York for an extended sojourn, leaving the entire responsibility of the business in young Hamilton's hands. Men of all ages were forced to obey and be guided by a boy in the last weeks of his fourteenth year, and there were many manifestations of jealous ill-will. Some loved, others hated him, but few submitted gracefully to a leadership which lowered their self-esteem. For the first time Alexander learned that even a mercantile life can be interesting. He exercised all the resources of his inborn tact with those who had loved and those who did not hate him, and won them to a grateful acceptance of a mastership which was far more considerate and sympathetic than anything they had known. As for his enemies, he let them see the implacable quality of his temper, mortified them by an incessant exposure of their failings, struck aside their clumsy attempts to humiliate him with the keen blade of a wit that sent them skulking. Finally they submitted, but they cursed him, and willingly would have wrung his neck and flung him into the bay. As for Hamilton, there was no compromise in him, even then, where his enemies were concerned. He enjoyed their futile wrath, and would not have lifted his finger to flash it into liking.

Only once the tropical passions of his inheritance con-

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quered his desire to dominate through the forces of his will alone. One of the oldest employees, a man named Cutter, had shown jealousy of young Hamilton from the first, and a few days after Mr. Cruger's departure began to manifest signs of open rebellion. He did his work ill, or not at all, absented himself from the store for two days, and returned to his post without excuse, squaring his shoulders about the place and sneering his contempt of youthful cocks of the walk. Alexander struggled to maintain a self-control which he felt to be strictly compatible with the dignity of his position, although his gorge rose so high that it threatened to choke him. The climax came when he gave Cutter a peremptory order, and the man took out a cigar, lit it, and laughed in his face. For the next few moments Alexander had a confused impression that he was in hell, struggling his way through the roar and confusion of his nether quarters. When he was himself again he was in the arms of his chief assistant, and Mr. Cutter bled profusely on the floor. He was informed later that he had "gone straight over the counter with a face like a hurricane" and assaulted his refractory hireling with such incredible rapidity of scientific fist that the man, who was twice his size, had succumbed from astonishment and an almost supernatural terror. Alexander, who was ashamed of himself, apologised at once, but gave the man his choice of treating him with proper respect or leaving the store. Cutter answered respectfully that he would remain; and he gave no further trouble.

"You'll get your head blown off one of these days," said Hugh Knox to Alexander, on a Sunday, as they sat in the library over two long glasses of "Miss Blyden," a fashionable drink made of sugar, rum, and the juice of

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the prickly pear, which had been buried in the divine's garden for the requisite number of months. "These Creoles are hot, even when they're only Danes. It's not pleasant for those clerks, for it isn't as if you had the look of the man you are. You look even younger than your age, and for a man of thirty to say 'Yes, sir' to a brat like you chokes him, and no wonder. I believe if there was a war this minute, you'd rouse the Island and lead it to battle without a misgiving or an apology. Well, don't let your triumphs lead to love of this business. I happen to know that Cruger means to make a partner of you in a few years, for he thinks the like of you never dropped into a merchant's counting-house; but never forget that your exalted destiny is to be a great man of letters, a historian, belike. You're taking to history, I notice, and you're getting a fine vocabulary of your own."

"I'd like to know what I'll write the history of if I'm to rot in this God-forsaken place. Caribs? Puling rows between French and English? I'd as well be up on Grange with my mother if it wasn't for you and your books. I want the education of a collegian. I want to study and read everything there is to be studied and read. I've made out a list of books to send for, when I've money enough, as long as you are. It's pinned on the wall of my room."

"And I suppose you've never a qualm but that head of yours will hold it all. You've a grand opinion of yourself, Alec."

"That's a cutting thing for you to say to me, sir," cried Alexander, springing to his feet. "I thought you loved me. If you think I'm a fool, I'll not waste more of your time."

"A West Indian temper beats the conceit out of the

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Irish. You'll control yours when you're older, for there's nothing you won't do when you put your mind to it, and you'll see the need for not making a fool of yourself too often. But as for its present liking for exercise—it's a long way the liveliest thing on St. Croix. However, you've forgiven me; I know that by the twinkle in your eye, so I'll tell you that your brain will hold all you care to put into it, and that you'll have made another list as long as King Street before you're five years older. Meanwhile, I've some books on theology and ethics you haven't had a dash at yet, and you can't read my other old books too often. Each time you'll find something new. Sitting up till midnight won't hurt you, but don't forget to say your prayers."

Knox, long since, had laid siege to Alexander's susceptible and ardent mind with the lively batteries of his religious enthusiasms. His favourite pupil was edifyingly regular in attendance at church, and said his prayers with much fervour. The burden of his petitions was deliverance from St. Croix.

When this deliverance was effected by a thunderbolt from heaven, his saving sense of humour and the agitated springs of his sympathy forbade a purely personal application. But twenty years later he might have reflected upon the opportune cause of his departure from St. Croix as one of the ironies of the world's history; for an Island was devastated, men were ruined, scores were killed, that one man might reach his proper sphere of usefulness.

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VIII.

EARLY in August, 1772, Mr. Cruger sent him on a business tour to several of the neighbouring Islands, including the great *entrepôt* of the West Indies,—St. Thomas. Despite the season, the prospect of no wind for days at a time, or winds in which no craft could live, Alexander trembled with delight at the idea of visiting the bustling brilliant versatile town of Charlotte Amalie, in whose harbour there were sometimes one hundred and eighty ships, where one might meet in a day men of every clime, and whose beauty was as famous as her wealth and importance. How often Alexander had stared at the blue line of the hills above her! Forty miles away, within the range of his vision, was a bit of the great world, the very pivot of maritime trade, and one cause and another had prevented him from so much as putting his foot on a sloop whose sails were spread.

As soon as the details of his tour were settled he rode out to the plantations to take leave of his relatives. Mrs. Mitchell, who barred the hurricane windows every time the wind rose between July and November, and sat with the barometer in her hand when the palms began to bend, wept a torrent and implored him to abstain from the madness of going to sea at that time of the year. Her distress was so acute and real that Alexander, who loved her, forgot his exultation and would have renounced the trip, had he not given his word to Mr. Cruger.

"I'll be careful, and I'll ride out the day after I return," he said, arranging his aunt on the sofa with her smelling-bottle, an office he had performed many times. "You know the first wind of the hurricane is a delight to

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the sailor, and we never shall be far from land. I'm in command, and I'll promise you to make for shore at the first sign of danger. Then I shall be as safe as here."

His aunt sighed for fully a minute. "If I only could believe that you would be careful about anything. But you are quite a big boy now, almost sixteen, and ought to be old enough to take care of yourself."

"If I could persuade you that I am not quite a failure at keeping the breath in my body we both should be happier. However, I vow not to set sail from any island if a hurricane is forming, and to make for port every time the wind freshens."

"Listen for that terrible roar in the southeast, and take my barometer—Heaven knows what barometers are made for; there are not three on the Island. I shall drive in to church every Sunday and besiege Heaven with my supplications."

"Well, spare me a breeze or I shall pray for a hurricane."

He did not see Mrs. Lytton or James, but Mr. Lytton had scant apprehension of hurricanes, and was only concerned lest his nephew roll about in the trough of the sea under an August sun for weeks at a time. "That's when a man doesn't repent of his sins; he knows there is nothing worse to come," he said. "I'd rather have a hurricane," and Alexander nodded. Mr. Lytton counted out a small bag of pieces of eight and told the boy to buy his aunt a silk gown in Charlotte Amalie. "I've noticed that if it's all one colour you're not so sure to have it accepted with a sigh of resignation," he said. "But be careful of plaids and stripes." And Alexander, with deeper misgivings than Mrs. Mitchell had inspired, accepted the commission and rode away.

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He set sail on the following day, and made his tour of the lesser islands under a fair breeze. Late in the month he entered the harbour of St. Thomas, and was delighted to find at least fifty ships in port, despite the season. It was an unusually busy year, and he had dared to hope for crowded waters and streets; exquisite as Charlotte Amalie might be to look upon, he wanted something more than a lovely casket.

The town is set on three conical foot-hills, which bulge at equal distances against an almost perpendicular mountain, the tip, it is said, of a range whose foundations are four miles below. The three sections of the town sweep from base to pointed apex with a symmetry so perfect, their houses are so light and airy of architecture, so brilliant and varied of colour, that they suggest having been called into being by the stroke of a magician's wand to gratify the whim of an Eastern potentate. Surely, they are a vast seraglio, a triple collection of pleasure houses where captive maidens are content and nautch girls dance with feet like larks. Business, commerce, one cannot associate with this enchanting vista; nor cockroaches as long as one's foot, scorpions, tarantulas, and rats.

When Alexander was in the town he found that the houses were of stone, and that one long street on the level connected the three divisions. Flights of steps, hewn out of the solid rock of that black and barren range, led to the little palaces that crowned the cones, and there were palms, cocoanuts, and tamarind-trees to soften the brilliancy of façade and roof. Above the town was Blackbeard's Castle; and Bluebeard's so high on the right that its guns could have levelled the city in an hour. Although not a hundred years old, and built by the Danes, both these frowning towers were museums of piratical tradition, and

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travellers returned to Europe with imaginations expanded.

The long street interested Alexander's practical mind more than legends or architecture. Huge stone buildings —warehouses, stores, exchange- and counting-houses— extended from the street to the edge of the water, where ships were unloaded and loaded from doors at the rear. Men of every nation and costume moved in that street; and for a day Mr. Cruger's business was in abeyance, while the boy from the quiet Island of St. Croix leaned against one of the heavy tamarind trees at the foot of the first hill, and watched the restless crowd of Europeans, Asiatics, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, North and South Americans. There were as many national costumes as there were rival flags in the harbour. There was the British admiral in his regimentals and powdered queue, the Chinaman in his blouse and pigtail, the Frenchman with earrings, villanous Malays, solemn merchants from Boston, and negroes trundling barrows of Spanish dollars. But it was the extraordinary assortment of faces and the violent contrasts of temperament and character they revealed which interested Alexander more than aught else. With all his reading he had not imagined so great a variety of types; his mental pictures had been the unconscious reflection of British, Danish, or African. Beyond these he had come in contact with nothing more striking than sailors from the neighbouring Islands, who had suggested little besides the advisability of placing an extra guard over the money boxes whilst they were in port. Most of these men who surged before him were merchants of the first rank or the representatives of others as important,—captains of large ships and their mates. The last sauntered and cursed the heat, which was infernal; but

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the merchants moved rapidly from one business house to another, or talked in groups, under the tamarind-trees, of the great interests which brought them to the Indies. Upon the inherent characteristics which their faces expressed were superimposed the different seals of those acquired,—shrewdness, suspicion, a hawk-like alertness, the greed of acquisition. Alexander, with something like terror of the future, reflected that there was not one of these men he cared to know. He knew there were far greater cities than the busy little *entrepôt* of the West Indies, but he rightly doubted if he ever should see again so cosmopolitan a mob, a more picked assortment of representative types. Not one looked as if he remembered his wife and children, his creed, or the art and letters of his land. They were a sweating, cursing, voluble, intriguing, greedy lot, picturesque to look upon, profitable to study, calculated to rouse in a boy of intellectual passions a fury of final resentment against the meannesses of commercial life. Alexander jerked his shoulders with disgust and moved slowly down the street. After he had reflected that great countries involved great ideas, and that there was no place for either political or moral ideals in an isolated and purely commercial town like little Charlotte Amalie, he recovered his poise, and lent himself to his surroundings again with considerable philosophy.

He had almost crossed the foot of the third hill when he turned abruptly into a large store, unlike any he had seen. It was full of women, splendid creatures, who were bargaining with merchants' clerks for the bales of fine stuffs which had been opened for the display of samples to the wholesale buyers from other Islands. These women purchased the exiled stuffs to sell to the ladies of the capital, and this was the only retail trade known to the St. Thomas

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of that day. Alexander bethought himself of his uncle's commission, and precipitately bought from the open bale nearest the door, then, from the next, a present for Mrs. Mitchell. Mrs. Lytton, who was an invalid and fifty-eight, received, a fortnight later, a dress pattern of rose-coloured silk, and Mrs. Mitchell, who aspired to be a leader of fashion, one of elderly brown. But Alexander was more interested in the sellers than in the possible dissatisfaction of his aunts. The women of his acquaintance were fair and fragile, and the Africans of St. Croix were particularly hideous, being still of parent stock. But these creatures were tawny and magnificent, with the most superb figures, the most remarkable swing, that ever a man had looked upon; and glorious eyes, sparkling with deviltry. On their heads the white linen was wound to a high point and surmounted by an immense hat, caught up at one side with a flower. They wore for clothing a double skirt of coloured linen, and a white fichu, open in a point to the waist and leaving their gold-coloured arms quite bare. They moved constantly, if only from one foot to the other. Occasionally their eyes flashed sparks, and they flew at each other's throats, screeching like guinea fowl, but in a moment they were laughing good-naturedly again, and chattering in voices of a remarkable soft sweetness. Several of them noticed Alexander, for his beauty had grown with his years. His eyes were large and grey and dark, like his mother's, but sparkled with ardour and merriment. His mouth was chiselled from a delicate fulness to a curving line; firm even then, but always humorous, except when some fresh experience with the ingenuous self-interest of man deepened the humour to cynicism. The nose was long, sharply cut, hard, strong in the nostrils, the head massive, the brow full above the eyes, and the whole of a

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boyish and sunburned fairness. He could fetch a smile that gave his face a sweet and dazzling beauty. His figure was so supple and well knit, so proud in its bearing, that no woman then or later ever found fault with its inconsiderable inches; and his hands and feet were beautiful. His adoring aunt attended to his wardrobe, and he wore to-day, as usual, white linen knee-breeches, black silk stockings, a lawn shirt much beruffled with lace. His appearance pleased these gorgeous birds of plumage, and one of them snatched him suddenly from the floor and gave him a resounding smack. Alexander, much embarrassed, but not wholly displeased, retreated hurriedly, and asked an Englishman who they were and whence they came.

"They are literally the pick of Martinique, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the other Islands celebrated for beautiful women. Of course they've all got a touch of the tar brush in them, but the French or the Spanish blood makes them glorious for a few years, and during those few they come here and make hay. Some come at certain seasons only, others perch here till they change in a night from houri to hag. This daylight trade gives them a *raison d'être,* but wait till after dark. God! this is a hell hole; but by moonlight or torchlight this street is one of the sights of the earth. The magnificent beauty of the women, enhanced by silken stuffs of every colour, the varied and often picturesque attire of the men, all half mad with drink —well, if you want to sleep, you'd better get a room high up."

"Mine is up one hundred and seventeen steps. I am but afraid I may not see all there is to see."

But before the week was half out he had tired of St. Thomas by day and by night. The picture was too one-

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sided, too heavily daubed with colour. It made a palette of the imagination, sticky and crude. He began to desire the green plantations of St. Croix, and more than ever he longed for the snow-fields of the north. Two days of hard work concluded Mr. Cruger's business, and on the thirtieth of the month he weighed anchor, in company with many others, and set sail for St. Croix. He started under a fair breeze, but a mile out the wind dropped, and he was until midnight making the harbour of Christianstadt. When they were utterly becalmed the sun seemed to focus his hell upon the little sloop. It rolled sickeningly in the oily wrinkled waters, and Alexander put his Pope in his pocket. The sea had a curious swell, and he wondered if an earthquake were imminent. The sea was not quite herself when her foundations were preparing to shake. Earthquakes had never concerned him, but as the boat drifted past the reef into the harbour of Christianstadt at midnight, he was assailed by a fit of terror so sudden and unaccountable that he could recall but one sensation in his life that approached it: shortly after he arrived on the Island he had stolen down to the lagoon one night, fascinated by the creeping mist, the scowling manchineels, the talk of its sinister inhabitant, and was enjoying mightily his new feeling of creeping terror, when the silence was broken by a heavy swish, and he saw the white belly of the shark not three feet from him. He had scampered up the hill to his mother's skirts as fast as his legs could carry him, nor visited the lagoon again until the shark was mouldering on its bed. To-night a mist, almost imperceptible except on the dark line of coast, changed the beauty of the moonbeams to a livid light that gave the bay the horrid pallor of a corpse. The masses of coral rock in the shallow waters looked leprous,

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the surface was so glassy that it fell in splinters from the oars of the boat that towed them to shore. There was not a sound from the reef, not a sound from the land. The slender lacing mangroves in the swamp looked like upright serpents, black and petrified, and the Fort on the high bluff might have been a sarcophagus full of dead men but for the challenge of the sentry.

Alexander began to whistle, then climbed down into the boat and took an oar. When he had his feet on land he walked up King Street more hastily than was his habit in the month of August. But here, although the town might have been a necropolis, so quiet was it, it had not put on a death mask. There was no mist here; the beautiful coral houses gleamed under the moonbeams as if turned to marble, and Alexander forgot the horror of the waters and paused to note, as he had done many times before, the curious Alpine contrast of these pure white masses against the green and burnished arches of tropic trees. Then he passed through the swimming-bath to his bed, and a half-hour later slept as soundly as if the terrible forces of the Caribbean world were safe in leash.

IX.

When he awoke, at seven o'clock, he heard a dull low roar in the southeast, which arrested his attention at once as a sound quite dissimilar from the boom of the reef. As he crossed Strand Street to Mr. Cruger's store, an hour later, he noticed that a strong wind blew from the same direction and that the atmosphere was a sickly yellow. For a moment, he thought of the hurricane which

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he had passed his life expecting, but he had a head full of business and soon forgot both roar and wind. He was immediately immersed in a long and precise statement of his trip, writing from notes and memory, muttering to himself, utterly oblivious to the opening of the windows or the salutations of the clerks. Mr. Cruger arrived after the late breakfast. He looked worried, but shook Alexander's hand heartily, and thanked heaven, with some fervour, that he had returned the night before. They retired to the private office on the court, and Mr. Cruger listened with interest to young Hamilton's account of his trip, although it was evident that his mind felt the strain of another matter. He said abruptly:—

"The barometer was down two-tenths when I visited the Fort at a quarter to eleven. I'd give a good deal to know where it is now."

Alexander remembered his aunt's barometer, which he had hung in his room before sailing, and volunteered to go over and look at it.

"Do," exclaimed Mr. Cruger; "and see if the wind's shifted."

As Alexander crossed Strand Street to the side door of Mr. Mitchell's house he encountered the strongest wind he had ever known, and black clouds were racing back and forth as if lost and distracted. He returned to tell Mr. Cruger that the barometer stood at 30.03.

"And the wind hasn't shifted?" demanded Mr. Cruger. "That means we'll be in the direct path of a hurricane before the day is half out, unless things change for the better. If the barometer falls four-tenths"—he spread out his hands expressively. "Of course we have many scares. Unless we hear two double guns from the Fort, there will be no real cause for alarm; but when you hear

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that, get on your horse as quick as you can and ride to warn the planters. The Lyttons and Stevens and Mitchells will do for you. I'll send out three of the other boys."

They returned to accounts. Mr. Cruger expressed his gratification repeatedly and forgot the storm, although the wind was roaring up King Street and rattling the jalousies until flap after flap hung on a broken hinge. Suddenly both sprang to their feet, books and notes tumbling to the floor. Booming through the steady roar of the wind was the quick thunder of cannon, four guns fired in rapid succession.

As Alexander darted through the store, the clerks were tumbling over each other to secure the hurricane windows; for until the last minute, uneasy as they were, they had persuaded themselves that St. Croix was in but for the lashing of a hurricane's tail, and had bet St. Kitts against Monserrat as flattening in the path of the storm. The hurricane windows were of solid wood, clamped with iron. It took four men to close them against the wind.

Alexander was almost flung across Strand Street. Shingles were flying, the air was salt with spray skimmed by the wind from the surface of waves which were leaping high above the Fort, rain was beginning to fall. Mr. Mitchell's stables were in the rear of his house. Every negro had fled to the cellar. Alexander unearthed four and ordered them to close the hurricane windows. He had saddled many a horse, and he urged his into Strand Street but a few moments later. Here he had to face the wind until he could reach the corner and turn into King Street, and even the horse staggered and gasped as if the breath had been driven out of him. He reared back against the wall, and Alexander was obliged to dismount

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and drag him up the street, panting for breath himself, although his back was to the wind and he kept his head down. The din was terrific. Cannon balls might have been rattling against the stones of every house, and to this was added a roar from the reef as were all the sounds of the Caribbean Sea gathered there. Alexander would have pulled his hat down over his ears, for the noise was maddening, but it had flown over the top of a house as he left the store. He was a quarter of an hour covering the few yards which lay between the stable and the corner, and when he reached the open funnel of King Street he was nearly swept off his feet. Fortunately the horse loved him, and, terrified as it was, permitted him to mount; and then it seemed to Alexander, as they flew up King Street to the open country, that they were in a fork of the wind, which tugged and twisted at his neck while it carried them on. He flattened himself to the horse, but kept his eyes open and saw other messengers, as dauntless as himself, tearing in various directions to warn the planters, many of whom had grown callous to the cry of "Wolf."

The horse fled along the magnificent avenue of royal palms which connected the east and west ends of the Island. They were bending and creaking horribly, the masses of foliage on the summits cowering away from the storm, wrapping themselves about in a curiously pitiful manner; the long blade-like leaves seemed striving each to protect the other. Through the ever-increasing roar of the storm, above the creaking of the trees, the pounding of the rain on the earth, and on the young cane, Alexander heard a continuous piercing note, pitched upon one monotonous key, like the rattle of a girl's castanets he had heard on St. Thomas. His brain, indifferent now to the din, was as active as ever, and he soon made out this

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particular noise to be the rattle of millions of seeds in the dry pods of the "shaggy-shaggy," or "giant," a common Island tree, which had not a leaf at this season, nothing but countless pods as dry as parchment and filled with seeds as large as peas. Not for a second did this castanet accompaniment to the stupendous bass of the storm cease, and Alexander, whose imagination, like every other sense in him, was quickening preternaturally, could fancy himself surrounded by the orchestra of hell, the colossal instruments of the infernal regions performed upon by infuriate Titans. He was not conscious of fear, although he knew that his life was not worth a second's purchase, but he felt a wild exhilaration, a magnificent sense of defiance of the most powerful element that can be turned loose on this planet; his nostrils quivered with delight; his soul at certain moments, when his practical faculty was uncalled upon, felt as if high in the roaring space with the Berserkers of the storm.

Suddenly his horse, in spite of the wall of wind at his back, stood on his hind legs, then swerved so fiercely that his rider was all but unseated. A palm had literally leaped from the earth, sprawled across the road not a foot in front of the horse. The terrified brute tore across the cane-field, and Alexander made no attempt to stop him, for, although the rain was now falling as if the sea had come in on the high back of the wind, he believed himself to be on the Stevens plantation. The negro village was not yet deserted, and he rode to the west side of the mill and shouted his warning to the blacks crouching there. On every estate was a great bell, hung in an open stone belfry, and never to be rung except to give warning of riot, flood, fire, or hurricane. One of the blacks obeyed Alexander's peremptory command to ring this bell, and,

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as it was under the lee of the mill, reached it in a moment. As Alexander urged his horse out into the storm again, he heard the rapid agitated clang of the bell mingle discordantly with the bass of the wind and the piercing rattle of the giant's castanets. He rode on through the cane-field, although if the horse stumbled and injured itself, he would have to lie on his face till the storm was over. But there was a greater danger in the avenue; he was close enough to see and hear tree after tree go down, or their necks wrenched and the great green heads rush through the air with a roar of their own, their long glittering leaves extended before them as if in supplication.

The Lytton plantation was next on his way, and Alexander rode straight for the house, as the mills and village lay far to the left. The hurricane shutters on the sides encountering the storm were already closed, and he rode round to the west, where he saw his uncle's anxious face at a drawing-room window. Mr. Lytton flung himself across the sash in an attempt to lift the boy from his horse into the room, and when Alexander shouted that he was on his way to the Mitchell estate, expostulated as well as he could without breaking his throat. He begged him to rest half an hour at least, but when informed that the Fort for the first time within the memory of man had fired its double warning, he ran to fasten his hurricane windows more securely, and despatch a slave to warn his blacks; their huts never would survive the direct attack of a hurricane. He was horrified to think of his favourite exposed to a fury, which, clever and intrepid as he was, he had small chance of outwitting; but at least he had that one chance, and Mrs. Mitchell was alone.

Alexander passed through one other estate before he reached Mr. Mitchell's, terrifying those he warned almost

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as much by his wild and ragged appearance—his long hair drove straight before him, and his thin shirt was in sodden ribbons—as by his news that a first-class hurricane was upon them. At last he was in the cane-fields of his destination, and the horse, as if in communication with that ardent brain so close to his own, suddenly accelerated his already mercurial pace, until it seemed to Alexander that he gathered up his legs and darted like an inflated swallow straight through crashing avenues and flying huts to the stable door. Fortunately this solid building opened to the west, and Alexander was but a few moments stalling and feeding the animal who had saved two necks by his clever feet that day. He was sorry so poorly to reward him as to close and bar the door, but he feared that he might forget to attend to it when the hurricane veered, and in all the fury of approaching climax was pouring out of the west.

The house was only an eighth of a mile away, but Alexander was half an hour reaching it. He had to travel on his knees, sometimes on his stomach, until he reached the western wall, keeping his arm pressed close against his eyes; his sense of humour, not to be extinguished by a hurricane, rebelling at the ignoble pass to which his pride had come. When he reached the north wall he rose, thinking he could cling to the projections, but he was still facing the storm; he flung himself prostrate again to avoid being lifted off his feet and sailing with the rubbish of Mr. Mitchell's plantation. As he reached the corner the wind gave him a vicious flip, which landed him almost at the foot of the steps, but he was comparatively safe, and he sat down to recover his breath. He could afford a few moments' rest, for the heavy wooden windows facing the east, north, and south,

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were closed. Here he was sheltered in a way. The only two good words that can be said for a hurricane are that it gives sufficient warning of its approach, and that it blows from one point of the compass at a time. Alexander sat there panting and watched the wild battle in mid-air of shingles, fences, thatched roofs, and tree-tops; listened to the artillery of the storm, which, with a stone building to break its steady roar, sounded as if a hundred cannon were bombarding the walls and rattling here and there on their carriages meanwhile; listened to crash after crash of tree and wall, the terrified howlings and bellowings of beasts, the shrieking and grinding of trees, the piercing monotone of the dry seeds in their cases of parchment, the groans and prayers of the negroes in the cellar behind him. He turned his head and looked through the windows of the great apartment, which, although above ground, was supposed to be safest in a hurricane. All but the western blinds being closed, the cellar was almost dark, but Alexander knew that it was packed: doubtless every African on the estate was there; he could see, for some distance back, row after row of rolling eyes and hanging tongues. Some knelt on the shoulders of others to get the air. Alexander shuddered. The sight reminded him of his uncle's slave-ships, where the blacks came, chained together, standing in the hold, so closely packed that if one died he could not fall, nor the others protect themselves from the poisons of a corpse, which pressed hard against the living for twenty hours perhaps, before it was unchained and flung to the sharks. Alexander went close to one of the windows and shouted to them not to forget to secure the western blinds when the lull came, then ran up the steps and vaulted through an open window. It was a few minutes before he found his aunt, and it

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must be recorded that on his way to the front of the house he looked under two beds and into four wardrobes. He came upon her in the drawing-room, valiantly struggling with a hurricane window. Her hair was dishevelled, and her eyes bulged with horror, but even as Alexander came to the rescue, she shoved the bar into place. Then she threw herself into his arms and fainted. He had but time to fling water on her face, when a loud rattle from another window sent him bounding to it, and for ten minutes he struggled to fasten the blind soundly again, while it seemed to him that a hundred malignant fingers were tugging at its edge. He had no sooner secured it, than his aunt's voice at his ear begged him to try every window on three sides of the house, and he went rapidly from one to the other, finding most of them in need of attention—long disuse had weakened both staples and hooks. His aunt trotted after him, thumping every window, and reminding him that if one went, and the wind burst in, the roof would be off and the torrents upon them before they could reach the cellar.

Fortunately for those who fought the storm, the temperature had fallen with the barometer, and these two dared not relax their vigilance for a moment. Every negro had deserted to the lower region. Alexander was unable to change his wet clothes or to refresh himself with so much as a banana, but there was not a second's time to think of hunger or discomfort. More than once that sense of wild exultation in fighting a mighty element possessed him. His own weak hands and a woman's weaker against one of the Titanic hurricanes of the world's history, with a prospect of winning the fight, was a sight to move comfortable gods to pæan or laughter, according to their spiritual development.

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But during much of that terrible day and night Alexander's brain was obliged to work on device after device to strengthen those battered boards which alone protected the house from destruction, its inmates, perhaps, from death. A tamarind-tree came down on a corner of the roof with a crash; and when Mrs. Mitchell and Alexander reached the room, which was in a wing, the rain was struggling past the heavy mass through a hole in the roof. They closed up the room, as well as the jalousies of the inner walls, but as they returned to the windows they heard the rain fighting to pass the branches, and knew that if the wind snatched the tree, the deluge would come in.

Mrs. Mitchell neither fainted again nor exhibited other sign of fear. While that hurricane lasted she was all Mary Fawcett; and Alexander, meeting her eyes now and again, or catching sight of her as she darted forward at the first rattle of a shutter, recalled his mother's many anecdotes of his redoubtable grandmother, and wondered if that valiant old soul had flown down the storm to the relief of the fortress.

Toward evening that sudden lull came which means that at last the besieged are in the very centre of the hurricane, and will have respite while the monster is swinging his tail to the west. Alexander and Mrs. Mitchell, after opening the windows on the east side of the house, and securing those opening to the west, went to the pantry and made a substantial meal without sitting or selecting. To his last day Alexander could not remember what he ate that night, although he recalled the candle in the long chimney, the constant craning of his aunt's head, the incessant racing of the rats along the beams. He went to his room and took a cold bath,

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which with the food and suspended excitement quite refreshed him; put on dry clothes, nailed a board against the hole in the roof, then sat down with Mrs. Mitchell in the western gallery to await the hurricane's return.

"We have three windows where we had one before," remarked Mrs. Mitchell; "and the hinges of that door are rusty. God knows! If you had not come, the roof would have gone long before this."

"The silence is horrible," said Alexander.

It was, indeed, ear-splitting. Not a sound arose from that devastated land. Birds and beasts must lie dead by the thousand; not a horseman ventured abroad; not a whisper came from the cellar, where two hundred Africans might be dead from fright or suffocation. Mrs. Mitchell had lit the candles, and there was something sinister and ironical in the steady flames. How long before they would leap and add the final horror to what must be a night of horrors? It was impossible to work in the dark, but every yellow point was a menace.

They had not long to endure the silence. This time the hurricane sent no criers before it. It burst out of the west with a fury so intensified that Alexander wondered if one stone in Fredrikstadt were left upon another. It was evident that it had gathered its forces for a final assault, and its crashing and roaring, as it tore across the unhappy Island it had marked for destruction, was that of a gigantic wheel whirling ten thousand cannon, exploding, and lashing each other in mid-air. It seemed to Alexander that every ball they surely carried rattled on the roof, and the heavy stone structure vibrated for the first time. It was two hours before he and Mrs. Mitchell met again, for they worked at opposite ends of the long gallery; but in the third both rushed simultaneously to

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the door. It sprang back from its rusty fastenings, and they were but in time to seize the bar which passed through a staple in its middle, and pull it inward until it pressed hard against the jamb on the right. There was no other way to secure it, and for three hours Alexander and Mrs. Mitchell dragged at it alternately, while the other attended to the windows. By this time Alexander had ceased to wonder if he should see another morning, or much to care: the storm was so magnificent in its almighty power, its lungs of iron bellowed its purpose with such furious iteration, as if out of all patience with the mortals who defied it, that Alexander was almost inclined to apologise. More than once it took the house by the shoulders and shook it, and then a yell would come from below, a simultaneous note pitched in a key of common agony. Suddenly the house seemed to spring from its foundations, then sink back as if to collapse. Alexander called out that it had been uprooted and would go down the hill in another moment, but Mrs. Mitchell, who was at the bar, muttered, "An earthquake. I believe a hurricane shakes the very centre of the earth."

They feared that the foundations of the house had been loosened, and that the next blast would turn it over, but the house was one of the strongest in the Caribbees, built to withstand the worst that Nature could do, so long as man saw to its needs; and when the hurricane at last revolved its artillery away into the east, carrying with it that piercing rattle of the giant's castanets, which never for a moment had ceased to perform its part, roof and walls were firm. Mrs. Mitchell and Alexander sank where they had stood, and slept for twenty hours.

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X.

ALEXANDER rode back to Christianstadt two days later, and again and again he drew a hard breath and closed his eyes. It was a sight to move any man, and the susceptible and tender nature of young Hamilton bled for the tragedy of St. Croix. There was not a landmark, not a cane-field, to remind him that it was the beautiful Island on which he had spent the most of his remembering years. Although all of the Great Houses were standing, their mien and manner were so altered by the disappearance of their trees and outbuildings, and by the surrounding pulpy flats in place of the rippling acres of young cane, that they were unrecognisable. Here and there were masses of *débris,* walls and thatched roofs swept far from the village foundations; but as a rule there was but a board here or a bunch of dried leaves there, a battered utensil or a stool, to reward the wretched Africans who wandered about searching for the few things they had possessed before the storm. They looked hopeless and dull, as if their faculties had been stunned by the prolonged incessant noise of the hurricane.

Alexander was riding down what a week ago had been the most celebrated avenue in the Antilles. Where there were trees at all, they were headless, the long grey twisted trunks as repulsive as they had once been beautiful. The road was littered with many of the fallen; but others were far away in what had been the cane-fields, serpents and lizards sunning themselves on the dead roots. Even stone walls were down, and under them, sometimes, were men. Mills were in ruins; for no one had remained to keep hooks and bars in their staples. Tanks of last

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year's rum and treacle had been flung through the walls, and their odours mingled with the stench of decomposing men and cattle. The horrid rattle of the land-crab was almost the only sound in that desolate land. "The Garden of the Antilles" looked like a putrid swamp, and she had not a beauty on her.

Alexander turned at a cross-road into a path which led through the Grange estate to the private burying-ground of the Lyttons. These few moments taxed his courage more heavily than the ride with the hurricane had done, and more than once he opened his clenched teeth and half turned his horse's head. But he went on, and before long he had climbed to the end of his journey. The west wall of the little cemetery had been blown out, and the roof of old James Lytton's tomb lay with its *débris*. A tree, which evidently had been torn from the earth and flung from a distance, lay half in and half out of the enclosure. But his mother's headstone, which stood against the north wall, was undisturbed, although the mound above her was flat and sodden. The earth had been strong enough to hold her. Alexander remembered its awful air of finality as it opened to receive her, then closed over her. What he had feared was that the burying-ground, which stood on the crest of a hill, would have been uprooted and scattered over the cane-fields.

He rode on to Christianstadt. There the evidences of the hurricane were less appalling, for the houses, standing closer together, had protected each other, and only two were unroofed; but everywhere the trees looked like twisted poles, the streets and gardens were full of rubbish, and down by the bay the shore was strewn with the wreckage of ships; the Park behind the Fort was thick with decay-

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ing fish, which the blacks were but just now sweeping out to the water.

After Alexander had ascertained that Mr. Mitchell's house was quite unharmed, although a neighbour had lost half a roof and been deluged in consequence, he walked out to Company Street to see how it had fared with Hugh Knox. That worthy gentleman was treating his battered nerves with weak whiskey and water when he caught sight of Alexander through the library window. He gave a shout that drew an exasperated groan through the ceiling, flung open the door, and clasped his beloved pupil in his arms.

"I knew you were safe, because you are you, although I've been afraid to ask if you were dead or alive. Cruger sent out three others to warn the planters, and they've all been brought home, one dead, one maimed, one with chills and fever and as mad as a March hare. Good God! what a visitation! I'd rather have been on a moving bog in Ireland. You wouldn't have ridden out in that hurricane if I'd got you, not if I'd been forced to tie you up. Fancy your being here alive, and not even a cold in your head! But you've a grand destiny to work out, and the hurricane—which I believe was the Almighty in a temper —knew what it was about. Now tell me your experience. I'm panting to tell you mine. I've not had a soul to talk to since the hour it started. The Missis behaved like a Trojan while it lasted, then went to bed, and hasn't spoken to me since; and as for everyone else in Christianstadt— well, they've retired to calm their nerves in the only way, —prayer first and whiskey after."

Alexander took possession of his own easy-chair and looked gratefully around the room. The storm had not disturbed it, neither had a wench's duster. Since his

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mother's death he had loved this room with a more grateful affection than any mortal had inspired, well as he loved his aunt, Hugh Knox, and Neddy. But the room did not talk, and the men, who had written the great books which made him indifferent to his island prison for days and weeks at a time, were dead and their selfishness was buried with them.

Meanwhile Knox, forgetting his desire to hear the experience of his guest, was telling his own. It was sufficiently thrilling, but not to be compared with that of the planter's; and when he had finished, Alexander began with some pride to relate his impressions of the storm. He, too, had not talked for three days; his heart felt warm again; and in the familiar comfortable room, the terrible picture of the hurricane seemed to spring sharp and vivid from his memory; he had recalled it confusedly hitherto, and made no effort to live it again. Knox leaned forward eagerly, dropping his pipe; Alexander talked rapidly and brilliantly, finally springing to his feet, and concluding with an outburst so eloquent that his audience cowered and covered his face with his hands. For some moments Knox sat thinking, then he rose and pushed a small table in front of Alexander, littering it with pencils and paper, in his untidy fashion.

"My boy," he said, "you're still hot with your own eloquence. Before you cool off, I want you to write that down word for word as you told it to me. If it twisted my very vitals, it will give a similar pleasure to others. 'Twould be selfish to deny them. When it's done, I'll send it to Tiebout. Now I'll leave you, and if my niggers are still too demoralised to cook supper for you, I'll do it myself."

Alexander, whose brain, in truth, felt on fire, for every

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nerve had leapt to the recreating of that magnificent Force that had gathered an island into the hollow of its hand, crushed, and cast it back to the waters, dashed at the paper and wrote with even more splendour than he had spoken. When he had finished, he was still so excited that he rushed from the house and walked till the hideous sights and smells drove him home. He was quivering with the ecstasy of birth, and longed for another theme, and hours and days of hot creation. But he was to be spared the curse of the "artistic temperament."

XI.

THE description of the hurricane went to St. Christopher by sloop two days later (there were no English papers on St. Croix), and was not heard from for two weeks. Meanwhile Alexander forgot it, as writers have a way of forgetting their infants of enthusiastic delivery. There was much to do on St. Croix. The negroes were put at once to rebuilding and repairing, and masters, as well as overlookers and agents, were behind them from morning till night. Mr. Mitchell had not returned, and Alexander was obliged to take charge of his estates. When he was not galloping from village to village and mill to mill, driving the sullen blacks before him, or routing them out of ruins and hollows, where they huddled in a demoralised stupor, he was consoling his aunt for the possible sacrifice of Mr. Mitchell to the storm. Alexander was quite confident that the hurricane had spared Tom Mitchell, whomsoever else it may have devoured, but his logic did not appeal to his aunt, who wept whenever he was there to offer his arm and shoulder. At other times she bustled about among

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her maids, who were sewing industriously for the afflicted.

Alexander was grateful for the heavy task Mr. Mitchell's absence imposed, for there was no business doing in Christianstadt, and his nerves were still vibrating to the storm he had fought and conquered. His rigorous self-control was gone, his suppressed energies and ambitions were quick and imperious, every vial of impatience and disgust was uncorked. As he rode through the hot sunlight or moved among the Africans, coaxing and commanding, getting more work out of them by his gay bright manner than the overlookers could extract with their whips, his brain was thumping with plans of delivery from a life which he hated so blackly that he would wrench himself free of it before the year was out if he had to ship as a common sailor for New York. It seemed to him that the vacancies in his brain ached. His imagination was hot with the future awaiting him beyond that cursed stretch of blinding water. For the first time he fully realised his great abilities, knew that he had in him the forces that make history. All the encouragement of his mother and Hugh Knox, the admiration and confidence of such men as Mr. Cruger, the spoiling of his relatives, and his easy conquest or equally flattering antagonism of the youth of the Island, had fostered his self-confidence without persuading him that he was necessarily a genius. Strong as his youthful ambitions had been, burning as his desire for more knowledge, much in his brain had been dormant, and a humorous philosophy, added to the sanguineness of youth and a deep affection for a few people, had enabled him to bear his lot with unbroken cheerfulness. But the clashing forces of the Universe had roused the sleeping giant in his brain and whirled his youth away. His only

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formulated ambition was to learn first all that schools could teach him, then lead great armies to battle. Until the day of his death his desire for military excitement and glory never left him, and at this time it was the destiny which heated his imagination. It seemed to him that the roar and rattle of the hurricane, in whose lead he had managed to maintain himself unharmed, were the loud prophecy of battle and conquest. At the same time, he knew that other faculties and demands of his brain must have their way, but he could only guess at their nature, and statesmanship was the one achievement that did not occur to him; the American colonies were his only hope, and there was no means by which he could know their wrongs and needs. Such news came seldom to the West Indies, and Knox retained little interest in the country where he had sojourned so short a while. And at this time their struggle hardly would have appealed to young Hamilton had he known of it. He was British by instinct and association, and he had never received so much as a scratch from the little-finger nail of the distant mother, whose long arm was rigid above her American subjects.

His deliverance was so quick and sudden that for a day or two he was almost as dazed as the Africans after the hurricane. One day Hugh Knox sent him out a copy of the St. Christopher newspaper which had published his description of the storm. With some pride in his first-born, he read it aloud to his aunt. Before he was halfway down the first column she was on the sofa with her smelling salts, vowing she was more terrified than when she had expected to be killed every minute. When he had finished she upbraided him for torturing people unnecessarily, but remarked that he was even cleverer than she had thought him. The next morning she asked him to read it again;

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then read it herself. On the following day Hugh Knox rode out.

Alexander was at one of the mills. Knox told Mrs. Mitchell that he had sent a copy of the newspaper to the Governor of St. Croix, who had called upon him an hour later and insisted upon knowing the name of the writer. Knox not only had told him, but had expanded upon Alexander's abilities and ambitions to such an extent that the Governor at that moment was with Peter Lytton, endeavouring to persuade him to open his purse-strings and send the boy to college.

"He will not do all," added Knox, "and I rely upon you to do the rest. Between you, Alexander can get, first the education he wants now more than anything in life, then the chance to make a great reputation among men. If you keep him here you're no better than criminals, and that's all I have to say."

Mrs. Mitchell shuddered. "Do you think he really wants to go?" she asked.

"Do I think he wants to go!" roared Hugh Knox. "Do I think—Good God! why he's been mad to go for five years. He'd have thought of nothing else if he hadn't a will like a bar of iron made for a hurricane door, and he'd have grown morbid about it if he hadn't been blest with a cheerful and a sanguine disposition. You adore him, and you couldn't see that!"

"He never said much about it," said Mrs. Mitchell, meekly; "but I think I can see now that you are right. It will make me ill to part with him, but he ought to go, and if Peter Lytton will pay half his expenses, I'll pay the other half, and keep him in pocket coin besides. Of course Tom won't give a penny, but I have something of my own, and he is welcome to it. Do have everything arranged be-

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fore my husband's return. He is alive and well. I had a letter from him by the sloop that came from St. Kitts, and he'll be here by the next or the one after."

As soon as Knox had gone Mrs. Mitchell ordered her coach and drove to Lytton's Fancy. Her love for Alexander had struggled quite out of its fond selfishness, and she determined that go to New York he should and by the next ship. She found her brother-in-law meditating upon the arguments of the Governor, and had less difficulty in persuading him than she had anticipated.

"I'm sorry we haven't sent him before," he said finally. "For if two men like Walsterstorff and Knox think so highly of him, and if he can write like that,—it gave me the horrors,—he ought to have his chance, and this place is too small for him. I'll help you to keep him at college until he's got his education,—and it will take him less time than most boys to get it,—and then he'll be able to take care of himself. If he sails on Wednesday, there's no produce to send with him to sell; but I've silver, and so have you, and he can take enough to keep him until the Island is well again. We'll do the thing properly, and he sha'n't worry for want of plenty."

When Alexander came home that evening he was informed that the world had turned round, and that he stood on its apex.

XII.

THE night before he sailed he rode out to the Grange estate. The wall of the cemetery had been repaired, James Lytton's slab was in its place, the tree had been removed, and he had rebuilt the mound above his mother

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as soon as the earth was firm again. There was no evidence of the hurricane here. The moon was out, and in her mellow bath the Island had the beauty of a desert. Alexander leaned his elbows on the wall and stared down at his mother's grave. He knew that he never should see it again. What he was about to do was for good and all. He would no more waste months returning to this remote Island than he would turn back from any of the goals of his future. And it mattered nothing to the dead woman there. If she had an immortal part, it would follow him, and she had suffered too much in life for her dust to resent neglect. But he passionately wished that she were alive and that she were sailing with him to his new world. He had ceased to repine her loss, much to miss her, but his sentiment for her was still the strongest in his life, and as a companion he had found no one to take her place. To-night he wanted to talk to her. He was bursting with hope and anticipation and the enthusiasm of the mere change, but he was close to melancholy.

Suddenly he bent his head. From the earth arose the golden music of a million tiny bells. They had hung rusty and warped since the hurricane, but to-night they rang again, and as sweetly as on the night, seventeen years ago, when their music filled the Universe, and two souls, whose destiny it was to bring a greater into the world, were flooded with a diviner music than that fairy melody. Alexander knew nothing of that meeting of his parents, when they were but a few years older than he was to-night, but the inherited echo of those hours when his own soul awaited its sentence may have stirred in his brain, for he stood there and dreamed of his mother and father as they had looked and thought when they had met and loved; and this he had never done before. The tireless little

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ringers filled his brain with their Lilliputian clamour, and his imagination gave him his parents in the splendour of their young beauty and passion. For the first time he forgave his father, and he had a deep moment of insight: one of the mysteries of life was bare before him. He was to have many of these cosmic moments, for although his practical brain relied always on hard work, never on inspiration, his divining faculty performed some marvellous feats, and saved him from much plodding; but he never had a moment of insight which left a profounder impression than this. He understood in a flash the weakness of the world, and his own. At first he was appalled, then he pitied, then he vibrated to the thrill of that exultation which had possessed his mother the night on the mountain when she made up her mind to outstay her guests. And then the future seemed to beckon more imperiously to the boy for whose sake she had remained, the radiant image of his parents melted in its crucible, and the world was flooded with a light which revealed more than the smoke of battlefields and the laurels of fulfilled ambition.

XIII.

On the following day, as Alexander stood on the wharf with his tearful relatives and friends, Hugh Knox detached him from Mrs. Mitchell and led him aside.

"Alec," he said, "I've two pieces of parting advice for you, and I want you to put them into the pocket of your memory that's easiest to find. Get a tight rein on that temper of yours. It's improved in the last year, but there's room yet. That's the first piece. This is the second: keep your own counsel about the irregularity of

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your birth, unless someone asks you point-blank who has the right; if anyone else does, knock him down and tell him to go to hell with his impertinence. And never let it hit your courage in the vitals for a moment. You are not accountable; your mother was the finest woman I ever knew, and you've got the best blood of Britain in your veins, and not a relative in the world who's not of gentle blood. You're an aristocrat in body and brain, and you'll not find a purer in the American colonies. The lack of a priest at the right time can cause a good deal of suffering and trouble, but it can't muddy a pure stream; and many a lawful marriage has done that. So, mind you never bring your head down for a minute, nor persuade yourself that anyone has a better right to keep it up. It would be the death of you."

Alexander nodded, but did not reply. He was feeling very low, now that the hour for parting was come, for his affections were strong and tender, and they were all rooted in the Island he hated. He understood, however.

He was six weeks reaching Boston, for even the wind seemed to have had the life beaten out of it. He had a box of Knox's books, which he was to return by the Captain; and although he had read them before, he read them again, and wrote commentaries, and so kept his mind occupied for the greater part of the voyage. But an active brain, inexperienced in the world, and in no need of rest, is always bored at sea, and he grew sick of the sight of that interminable blue waste; of which he had seen too much all his life. When he had learned all there was to know about a ship, and read all his books, he burned for change of any sort. The change, when it came, was near to making an end of him: the ship

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caught fire, and they were a day and a night conquering the flames and preparing their philosophy to meet death; for the boats were unseaworthy. Alexander had all the excitement he wanted, for he fought the fire as hard as he had fought the hurricane, and he was delighted when the Captain gave him permission to turn in. This was his third touch-and-go with death.

He arrived in Boston late in October, and took passage immediately for New York. There had been no time to announce his coming, and he was obliged to find his own way to the house of Hercules Mulligan, a member of the West Indian firm, to whom Mr. Cruger had given him a warm letter of introduction. Mr. Mulligan, a good-natured Irishman, received him hospitably, and asked him to stop in his modest house until his plans were made. Alexander accepted the invitation, then started out in search of his friend, Ned Stevens, but paused frequently to observe the queer, straggling, yet imposing little city, the red splendour of the autumn foliage; above all, to enjoy the keen and frosty air. All his life he had longed for cold weather. He had anticipated it daily during his voyage, and, although he had never given way to the natural indolence of the Tropics, he had always been conscious of a languor to fight. But the moment the sharp air of the North had tingled his skin his very muscles seemed to harden, his blood to quicken, and even his brain to become more alert and eager. If he had been ambitious and studious in an average temperature of eighty-five degrees, what would happen when the thermometer dropped below zero? He smiled, but with much contentment. The vaster the capacity for study, the better; as for his ambitions, they could rest until he had finished his education. Now that his feet were fairly

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planted on the wide highway of the future, his impatience was taking its well-earned rest; he would allow no dreams to interfere with the packing of his brain.

It was late in the afternoon, and the fashionable world was promenading on lower Broadway and on the Battery by the Fort. It was the first time that Alexander had seen men in velvet coats, or women with hoop-skirts and hair built up a foot, and he thought the city, with its quaint Dutch houses, its magnificent trees, and these brilliant northern birds, quite like a picture-book. They looked high-bred and intelligent, these animated saunterers, and Alexander regarded the women with deep inquisitiveness. Women had interested him little, with the exception of his mother, who he took for granted was *sui generis*. The sisters of his friends were white delicate creatures, languid and somewhat affected; and he had always felt older than either of his aunts. In consequence, he had meditated little upon the sex to which poets had formed a habit of writing sonnets, regarding them either as necessary appendages or creatures for use. But these alert, dashing, often handsome women, stirred him with a new gratitude to life. He longed for the day when he should have time to know them, and pictured them gracing the solid homelike houses on the Broadway, and in the fine grounds along the river front, where he strayed after a time, having mistaken the way to King's College. He walked back through Wall Street, and his enthusiasm was beginning to ebb, he was feeling the first pangs of a lonely nostalgia, when he almost ran into Ned Stevens's arms. It was four years since they had met. Stevens had grown a foot and Alexander a few inches, but both were boyish in appearance still and recognised each other at once.

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"When I can talk," exclaimed Stevens, "when I can get over my amazement — I thought at first it was my double, come to tell me something was wrong on the Island—I'll ask you to come to Fraunces' Tavern and have a tankard of ale. It's healthier than swizzle."

"That is an invitation, Neddy," cried Alexander, gaily. "Initiate me at once. I've but a day or two to play in, but I must have you for playfellow."

They dined at Fraunces' Tavern and sat there till nearly morning. Alexander had much to tell but more to hear, and before they parted at Mr. Mulligan's door he knew all of the New World that young Stevens had patiently accumulated in four years. It was a stirring story, that account of the rising impatience of the British colonies, and Stevens told it with animation and brevity. Alexander became so interested that he forgot his personal mission, but he would not subscribe to his friend's opinion that the Colonials were in the right.

"Did I have the time, I should study the history of the colonies from the day they built their first fort," he said. "Your story is picturesque, but it does not convince me that they have all the right on their side. England—"

"England is a tyrannical old fool," young Stevens was beginning, heatedly, when a man behind arose and clapped a hand over his mouth.

"There are three British officers at the next table," he said. "We don't want any more rows. One too many, and God knows what next."

Stevens subsided, but Alexander's nostrils expanded. Even the mental atmosphere of this brilliant North was full of electricity.

The next day he presented to Dr. Rogers and Dr.

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Mason the letters which Hugh Knox had given him. He interested them at once, and when he asked their advice regarding the first step he should take toward entering college, they recommended Francis Barber's Grammar School, at Elizabethtown, New Jersey. Stevens had suggested the same institution, and so did other acquaintances he made during his brief stay in the city which was one day to be christened by angry politicians, "Hamiltonopolis." Early in the following week he crossed to New Jersey and rode through the forests to the village, with its quaint streets and handsome houses, "the Burial Yard Lot," beside the main thoroughfare of the proud little hamlet, and Mr. Barker's Grammar School at its upper end. Hamilton was accepted immediately, but where to lodge was a harassing question. The only rooms for hire were at the tavern, where permanent lodgment would be intolerable. When he presented a letter to Mr. Boudinot, which Mr. Cruger had given him, the problem was solved at once. Mr. Boudinot, one of the men of his time, had a spacious and elegant house, set amidst gardens, lawns, and forest trees; there were many spare bedrooms, and he invited Hamilton to become a member of his family. The invitation was given as a matter of course, and Hamilton accepted it as frankly. All the pupils who were far from home visited in the neighbourhood. Liberty Hall, on the Springfield turnpike, was finishing when Hamilton arrived. When the family was installed and he presented his letter to its owner, William Livingston, he received as pressing an invitation as Mr. Boudinot's, and divided his time between the two houses.

Mr. Boudinot was a large man, with a long nose and a kindly eye, who was deeply attached to his children. Susan was healthy, pretty, lively, and an ardent young

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patriot. The baby died, and Hamilton, having offered to sit up with the little body, entertained himself by writing an appropriate poem, which was long treasured by Mr. Boudinot.

At Liberty Hall life was even more interesting. William Livingston was one of the ablest lawyers, most independent thinkers, and ardent republicans of the unquiet times. Witty and fearless, he had for years made a target of kingly rule; his acid cut deep, doing much to weaken the wrong side and encourage the right. His wife was as uncompromising a patriot as himself; his son, Brockholst, and his sprightly cultivated daughters had grown up in an atmosphere of political discussion, and in constant association with the best intellects of the day. Sarah, the beauty, was engaged to John Jay, already a distinguished lawyer, notoriously patriotic and high-minded. He was a handsome man, with his dark hair brushed forward about his face, his nobility and classic repose of feature. Mr. Livingston wore his hair in a waving mass, as long as he had any. His nose was large and sharp, and he had a very disapproving eye. He took an immediate liking to young Hamilton, however, and his hospitality was frank and delightful. Brockholst and Alexander liked and admired each other in those days, although they were to become bitter enemies in the turbulent future. As for the lively bevy of women, protesting against their exile from New York, but amusing themselves, always, they adopted "the young West Indian." The delicate-looking boy, with his handsome sparkling face, his charming manners, and gay good humour captivated them at once; and he wrote to Mrs. Mitchell that he was become shockingly spoiled. When Mr. Livingston discovered that his brain and knowledge were extraordinary, he ceased at once to

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treat him as a fascinating boy, and introduced him to the men who were constantly entertained at his house: John Jay, James Duane, Dr. Witherspoon, President of Princeton; and members of the Morris, Schuyler, Ogden, Clinton, and Stockton families. The almost weekly conversation of these men contributed to the rapid maturing of Hamilton's mind. His recreation he found with the young women of the family, and their conversation was not always political. Sarah Livingston, beautiful, sweet, and clever, was pensively in love; but Kitty and Susan were not, and they were handsome and dashing. They were sufficiently older than Alexander to inspire him with the belief that he was in love with each in turn; and if he was constant to either, it was to Kitty, who was the first to reveal to him the fascination of her sex. But they did not interrupt the course of his studies; and in the dawn, when he repaired to the Burial Yard Lot to think out his difficult task for the day, not a living face haunted the tombstones.

And when winter came and he walked the vast black forests alone, the snow crunching under his feet, the blood racing in his body, a gun on his shoulder, lest he meet a panther, or skated till midnight under the stars, a crystal moon illuminating the dark woods on the river's edge, the frozen tide glittering the flattering homage of earth, he felt so alive and happy, so tingling and young and primeval, that had his fellow-inhabitants flown to the stars he would not have missed them. Until that northern winter embraced and hardened him, quickening mind and soul and body, crowding the future with realised dreams, he never had dared to imagine that life could be so fair and beautiful a thing.

On stormy winter nights, when he roasted chestnuts

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or popped corn in the great fireplace of Liberty Hall, under the tuition of all the Livingston girls, Sarah, Susan, Kitty, and Judith, he felt very sociable indeed; and if his ears, sometimes, were soundly boxed, he looked so penitent and meek that he was contritely rewarded with the kiss he had snatched.

The girls regarded him as a cross between a sweet and charming boy to be spoiled—one night, when he had a toothache, they all sat up with him—and a phenomenon of nature of which they stood a trifle in awe. But the last was when he was not present and they fell to discussing him. And with them, as with all women, he wore, because to the gay vivacity and polished manners of his Gallic inheritance he added the rugged sincerity of the best of Britons; and in the silences of his heart he was too sensible of the inferiority of the sex, out of which, first and last, he derived so much pleasure, not to be tender and considerate of it always.

Before the year of 1773 was out Mr. Barber pronounced him ready for college, and, his choice being Princeton, he presented himself to Dr. Witherspoon and demanded a special course which would permit him to finish several years sooner than if he graduated from class to class. He knew his capacity for conquering mental tasks, and having his own way to make in the world, had no mind to waste years and the substance of his relatives at college. Dr. Witherspoon, who had long been deeply interested in him, examined him privately and pronounced him equal to the heavy burden he had imposed upon himself, but feared that the board of trustees would not consent to so original a plan. They would not. Hamilton, nothing daunted, applied to King's College, and found no opposition there. He entered as a private student, at-

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tached to no particular class, and with the aid of a tutor began his customary annihilation of time. Besides entering upon a course of logic, ethics, mathematics, history, chronology, rhetoric, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, all the modern languages, and Belles Lettres, he found time to attend Dr. Clossy's lectures on anatomy, with his friend Stevens, who was studying medicine as a profession.

King's was a fine building facing the North River and surrounded by spacious grounds shaded by old sycamores and elms. There were many secluded corners for thought and study. A more favourite resort of Alexander's was Batteau Street, under whose great elms he formed the habit of strolling and muttering his lessons, to the concern of the passer-by. In his hours of leisure he rollicked with Stevens and his new friends, Nicolas Fish and Robert Troup. The last, a strong and splendid specimen of the young American collegian, had assumed at once the relation of big brother to the small West Indian, but was not long discovering that Hamilton could take care of himself; was flown at indeed by two agile fists upon one occasion, when protectiveness, in Alexander's measurement, rose to interference. But they formed a deep and lifelong friendship, and Troup, who was clever and alert, without brilliancy, soon learned to understand Hamilton, and was not long recognising potentialities of usefulness to the American cause in his genius.

It was Troup who took him for his first sail up the Hudson, and except for the men who managed the boat, they went alone. Troup was a good listener, and for a time Hamilton chattered gaily as the boat sped up the river, jingling rhymes on the great palisades, which looked like the walls of some Brobdingnagian fortress, and upon the gorgeous masses of October colouring swarming over

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the perpendicular heights of Jersey and the slopes and bluffs of New York. It was a morning, and a piece of nature, to make the quicksilver in Hamilton race. The arch was blue, the tide was bluer, the smell of salt was in the keen and frosty air. Two boats with full white sails flew up the river. On either bank the primeval forest had burst in a night into scarlet and gold, pale yellow and crimson, bronze, pink, the flaming hues of the Tropics, and the delicate tints of hot-house roses. Hamilton had never seen such a riot of colour in the West Indies. They passed impenetrable thickets close to the water's edge, ravines, cliffs, irregular terraces on the hillside, gorges, solitary heights, all flaunting their charms like a vast booth which has but a day in which to sell its wares. They sped past the beautiful peninsula, then the lawns of Philipse Manor. Hamilton stepped suddenly to the bow of the boat and stood silent for a long while.

The stately but narrow end of the Hudson was behind; before him rolled a wide and ever widening majestic flood, curving among its hills and palisades, through the glory of its setting and the soft mists of distance, until the far mountains it clove trembled like a mirage. The eye of Hamilton's mind followed it farther and farther yet. It seemed to him that it cut the world in two. The sea he had had with him always, but it had been the great chasm between himself and life, and he had often hated it. This mighty river, haughty and calm in spite of the primeval savagery of its course, beat upon the gates of his soul, beat them down, filled him with a sense of grandeur which made him tremble. He had a vision of the vastness and magnificence of the New World, of the great lonely mountains in the North, with their countless lakes hidden in the immensity of a trackless forest, of other

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mountain ranges equally wild and lonely, cutting the monotony of plains and prairies, and valleys full of every delight. All that Hamilton had read or heard of the immense area beyond or surrounding the few cities and hamlets of the American colonies, flew to coherence, and he had a sudden appreciation of the stupendousness of this new untravelled world, understood that with its climate, fertility, and beauty, its large nucleus of civilisation, its destiny must be as great as Europe's, nor much dissimilar, no matter what the variance of detail. The noblest river in the world seemed to lift its voice like a prophet, and the time came—after his visit to Boston—when Hamilton listened to it with a thrill of impatient pride and white-hot patriotism But to-day he felt only the grandeur of life as he never had felt it before, felt his soul merge into this mighty unborn soul of a nation sleeping in the infinity, which the blue flood beneath him spoke of, almost imaged; with no premonition that his was the destiny to quicken that soul to its birth.

While on the ship, Alexander had written to his father, asking for news of him and telling of the change in his own fortunes. James Hamilton had replied at once, gratefully, but with melancholy; by this time he knew himself to be a failure, although he was now a planter in a small way. Alexander's letter, full of the hope and indomitable spirit of youth, interested as keenly as it saddened him. He recalled his own high courage and expectant youth, and wondered if this boy had stronger mettle than his own equipment. Then he remembered Rachael Levine and hoped. He lived to see hope fulfilled beyond any achievement of his imagination, although the correspondence, brisk for a time, gradually subsided. From Hugh

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Knox and Mrs. Mitchell Alexander heard constantly, and it is needless to state that his aunt kept him in linen which was the envy of his friends. His beruffled shirts and lace stocks were marvels, and if he was an exquisite in dress all his life, it certainly was not due to afterthought. Meanwhile, he lodged with the family of Hercules Mulligan, and wrote doggerel for their amusement in the evening. Troup relates that Hamilton presented him with a manuscript of fugitive poetry, written at this period. Mercifully, Troup lost it. Hamilton has been peculiarly fortunate in this respect. He lies more serenely in his grave than most great men.

When he was not studying, or joking, or rhyming, during those two short years of college life, he read: Cudworth's "Intellectual System," Hobbes's "Dialogues," Bacon's "Essays," Plutarch's "Morals," Cicero's "De Officiis," Montaigne's "Essays," Rousseau's "Émile," Demosthenes's "Orations," Aristotle's "Politics," Ralt's "Dictionary of Trade," and the "Lex Mercatoria."

He accomplished his mental feats by the—to him—simple practice of keeping one thing before his mind at a time, then relegating it uncompromisingly to the background; where, howeyer, it was safe in the folds of his memory. What would have sprained most minds merely stimulated his, and never affected his spirits nor his health, highly as nature had strung his nerves. He was putting five years college work into two, but the effect was an expansion and strengthening of the forces in his brain; they never weakened for an instant.

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XIV.

In the spring of 1774 Hamilton visited Boston during a short holiday. His glimpse of this city had been so brief that it had impressed his mind but as a thing of roofs and trees, a fantastic woodland amphitheatre, in whose depths men of large and solemn mien added daily to the sum of human discomfort. He returned to see the important city of Boston, but with no overwhelming desire to come in closer contact with its forbidding inhabitants. He quickly forgot the city in what those stern sour men had to tell him. For to them he owed that revelation of the tragic justice of the American cause which enabled him to begin with the pen his part in the Revolution, forcing the crisis, taking rank as a political philosopher when but a youth of seventeen; instead of bolting from his books to the battlefield at the first welcome call to arms. Up to this time he had adhered to his resolution to let nothing impede the progress of his education, to live strictly in the hour until the time came to leave the college for the world. Therefore, although he had heard the question of Colonies versus Crown argued week after week at Liberty Hall, and at the many New York houses where he dined of a Sunday with his friends, Stevens, Troup, and Fish, he had persistently refused to study the matter: there were older heads to settle it and there was only one age for a man's education. Moreover, he had grown up with a deep reverence for the British Constitution, and his strong aristocratic prejudices inclined him to all the aloofness of the true conservative. So while the patriots and royalists of King's were debating, ofttimes concluding in sequestered nooks, Hamilton remained "The young West

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Indian," an alien who cared for naught but book-learning, walking abstractedly under the great green shade of Batteau Street while Liberty Boys were shouting, and British soldiers swaggered with a sharp eye for aggression. This period of philosophic repose in the midst of electric fire darting from every point in turn and sometimes from all points at once, endured from the October of his arrival to its decent burial in Boston shortly after his seventeenth birthday.

Boston was sober and depressed, stonily awaiting the vengeance of the crown for her dramatic defiance in the matter of tea. Even in that rumbling interval, Hamilton learned, the Committee of Correspondence, which had directed the momentous act, had been unexcited and methodical, restraining the Mohawks day after day, hoping until the last moment that the Collector of Customs would clear the ships and send the tea whence it came. Hamilton heard the wrongs of the colonies discussed without any of the excitement or pyrotechnical brilliancy to which he had become accustomed. New York was not only the hot-bed of Toryism, but even such ardent Republicans as William Livingston, George Clinton, and John Jay were aristocrats, holding themselves fastidiously aloof from the rank and file that marched and yelled under the name of Sons of Liberty. To Hamilton the conflict had been spectacular rather than real, until he met and moved with these sombre, undemonstrative, superficially unpleasing men of Boston; then, almost in a flash, he realised that the colonies were struggling, not to be relieved of this tax or that, but for a principle; realised that three millions of people, a respectable majority honourable, industrious, and educated, were being treated like incapables, apprehensive of violence if they dared to protest for their rights under

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the British Constitution. Hamilton also learned that Boston was the conspicuous head and centre of resistance to the crown, that she had led the colonies in aggressiveness since the first Stamp Act of 1765 had shocked them from passive subjects into dangerous critics. He had letters which admitted him to clubs and homes, and he discussed but one subject during his visit. There were no velvet coats and lace ruffles here, except in the small group which formed the Governor's court. The men wore dun-coloured garments, and the women were not much livelier. It was, perhaps, as well that he did not see John Hancock, that ornamental head-piece of patriotic New England, or the harmony of the impression might have been disturbed; but, as it was, every time he saw these men together, whether sitting undemonstratively in Faneuil Hall while one of their number spoke, or in church, or in groups on Boston Common, it was as if he saw men of iron, not of flesh and blood. Every word they uttered seemed to have been weighed first, and it was impossible to consider such men giving their time and thought, making ready to offer up their lives, to any cause which should not merit the attention of all men. Although Hamilton met many of them, they made no individual impression on him; he saw them only as a mighty brain, capable of solving a mighty question, and of a stern and bitter courage.

He returned to New York filled with an intense indignation against the country which he had believed too ancient and too firm in her highest principles to make a colossal mistake, and a hot sympathy for the colonists which was not long resolving itself into as burning a patriotism as any in the land. It was not in him to do anything by halves; it is doubtful if he ever realised the half-hearted tendency of the greater part of mankind. He

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studied the question from the first Stamp Act to the Tea Party. The day he was convinced, he ceased to be a West Indian. The time was not yet come to draw the sword in behalf of the country for which he conceived a romantic passion, which satisfied other wants of his soul, but he began at once on a course of reading which should be of use to her when she was free to avail herself of patriotic thinkers. He also joined the debating club of the college. His abrupt advent into this body, with his fiery eloquence and remarkable logic, was electrical. In a day he became the leader of the patriot students. There were many royalists in King's, and the president, Dr. Myles Cooper, was a famous old Tory. He looked upon this influential addition to the wrong side with deep disfavour, and when he discovered that the most caustic writer of Holt's Whig newspaper, who had carved him to the quick and broken his controversial lances again and again, was none other than his youngest and most revolutionary pupil, his wrath knew no bounds.

With the news of the order to close the port of Boston, the wave of indignation in the colonies rose so high that even the infatuated clergy wriggled. Philadelphia went so far as to toll her muffled bells for a day, and as for New York, then as now, the nerve-knot of the country, she exploded. The Sons of Liberty, who had reorganised after the final attempt of England to force tea on the colonies, paraded all day and most of the night, but were, as yet, more orderly than the masses, who stormed through the streets with lighted torches, shrieking and yelling and burning the king and his ministers in effigy.

The substantial citizens also felt that the time was come to prepare for the climax toward which their fortunes were hastening. That spiteful fist would be at their own

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skulls next, beyond a doubt. The result of a long and hot debate in the Exchange between the Sons of Liberty and the more conservative patriots was an agreement to call a Congress of the Colonies. The contest over the election of delegates was so bitter, however, the Committee of the Assembly, which was largely ministerial, claiming the right to nomination, that it was determined to submit the question to the people at large.

XV.

In the early morning Hamilton still sauntered beneath the college trees or those of Batteau Street, pondering on his studies, and abstracting himself from the resting city; but in the evenings and during half the night he inhaled the hot breath of rebellion; and the flaring torches, the set angry faces, the constant shouting, the frightened pallor of the women at the windows of the great houses on the line of march, the constant brawls with British soldiers, stormed the curb he had put on his impatient spirit. He realised that the colonies were not yet prepared to fight, and he had no thought of doing anything rash, but it was his propensity to do a thing at once if it were to be done at all, and this last indignity should result in something except talk. He was present at the meeting in the Exchange and listened carefully to all that was said, feeling that he could add to that whirlwind of ideas, but forbearing on account of his youth. His mind, by now, was so mature that he reminded himself, with some difficulty, that he was but seventeen. He was as lively and as happy as ever, but that was temperamental and would endure through all things; mentally he had no

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youth in him, had had little since the day he began to ask questions.

The meeting in the Fields—at which it was hoped to effect a choice of delegates by the people at large—was called for the 6th of July, and a great multitude assembled. Alexander McDougall, the first patriot to have suffered imprisonment at the hands of the Tyrant, presided, and celebrated speakers harangued. It was here that Hamilton's impatience got rid of its curb. He heard much that was good, more that was bad, little that was new; and he found the radicals illogical and the conservatives timid. Nicolas Fish and Robert Troup pushed their way through the crowd to where Hamilton stood, his uplifted face expressing his thoughts so plainly to those who knew him that these friends determined to force him to the platform.

At first he protested; and in truth, the idea, shaping concretely, filled his very legs with terror; but the young men's insistence, added to his own surging ideas, conquered, and he found himself on the platform facing a boundless expanse of three-cornered hats. Beneath were the men who represented the flower as well as the weeds of the city, all dominated by the master passion of the civilised world. There was little shade in the Fields and the day was hot. It was a crowded, uncomfortable, humid mass whose attention he was about to demand, and their minds were already weary of many words, their calves of the ruthless mosquito. They stared at Hamilton in amazement, for his slender little figure and fair curling hair, tied loosely with a ribbon, made him look a mere boy, while his proud high-bred face, the fine green broadcloth of his fashionably cut garments, the delicate lawn of his shirt and the profusion of lace with which it was

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trimmed, particularly about his exquisite hands, gave him far more the appearance of a court favourite than a champion of liberty. Some smiled, others grunted, but all remained to listen, for the attempt was novel, and he was beautiful to look upon.

For a moment Hamilton felt as if the lower end of his heart had grown wings, and he began falteringly and in an almost inaudible voice. Pride hastened to his relief, however, and his daily debates in college had given him assurance and address. He recovered his poise, and as ideas swam from his brain on the tide of a natural eloquence, he forgot all but the great principle which possessed him in common with that jam of weary men, the determination to inspire them to renewed courage and greater activity. He rehearsed their wrongs, emphasised their inalienable rights under the British Constitution—from which the ministerial party and a foolish sovereign had practically divorced them. He insisted that the time had come in their history to revert to the *natural* rights of man—upon which all civil rights were founded—since they were no longer permitted to lead the lives of self-respecting citizens, pursuing the happiness which was the first instinct of the human intelligence; they had been reduced almost to the level of their own slaves, who soon would cease to respect them.

He paused so abruptly that the crowd held its breath. Then his rising thrilling voice sounded the first note of the Revolution. "It is war!" he cried. "It is war! It is the battlefield or slavery!"

When the deep roar which greeted the startling words had subsided, he spoke briefly of their immense natural advantages, in the event of war, the inability of England to gain any permanent advantage, and finally of the vast

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resources of the country, and its phenomenal future, when the "waves of rebellion, sparkling with fire, had washed back to the shores of England the wrecks of her power, her wealth, and her glory."

His manner was as fiery and impetuous as his discourse was clear, logical, and original. The great crowd was electrified. It was as if a blade of lightning had shot down from the hot blue sky to illuminate the doubting recesses of their understandings. They murmured repeatedly "It is a collegian," "a collegian," and they thundered their applause when he finished.

Troup and Fish bore him off in triumph to Fraunces' Tavern, where Stevens joined them immediately, hot, but exultant.

"I've just passed our president, looking like an infuriated bumblebee," he cried. "I know he heard your speech from some hidden point of vantage. It was a great speech, Alec. What a pity Hugh Knox, Mr. Lytton, and Benny Yard were not there to hear. I'll write them about it to-night, for St. Croix ought to burn a bonfire for a week. It was a hurricane with a brain in it that whirled you straight to these shores—as opportune for this country as for your own ambitions, for, unless I'm much mistaken, you're going to be a prime factor in getting rid of these pestiferous redcoats—we've a private room, so I can talk as I please. One tried to trip me up just now, thinking I was you."

Fish leaned across the table and looked penetratingly at Hamilton, who was flushed and nervous. The young New Yorker had a chubby face, almost feminised by a soft parted fringe, but his features were strong, and his eyes preternaturally serious.

"You've committed yourself, Hamilton," he said.

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"That was no college play. Whether you fight or not doesn't so much matter, but you must give us your pen and your speech. I'm no idle purveyor of compliments, but you are extraordinary, and there isn't a man living can do for the cause with his pen what you can do. Write pamphlets, and they'll be published without an hour's delay."

"Ah, I see!" cried Hamilton, gaily. "I was a bit bewildered. You think my new patriotism needs nursing. 'After all, he is a West Indian, born British, brought up under Danish rule, which is like being coddled by one's grandmother. He sympathises with us, his mind is delighted with a new subject for analysis and discourse, but patriotism—that is impossible.' Is it not true?"

"You have read my thought," said Fish, with some confusion. "And you have a great deal to occupy your mind. I never have known anyone whose brain worked at so many things at once. I am selfish euough to want you to give a good bit of it to us."

"I never was one to make fierce demonstrations," said Alexander; "but fill up another bumper—the first has calmed my nerves, which were like to jump through my skin—and stand up, and I'll drink you a pledge."

The three other young men sprang to their feet, and stood with their glasses raised, their eyes anxiously fixed on young Hamilton. They had believed him to be preparing himself for a great career in letters, and knowing his tenacity and astonishing powers of concentration, had doubted the possibility of interesting him permanently in politics. They all had brains and experience enough—it was a hot quick time—to recognise his genius, and to conceive the inestimable benefit it could confer upon the

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colonial cause. Moreover, they loved him and wanted to see him famous as quickly as possible.

"Stand up on the table," cried Troup. "It is where you belong; and you're the biggest man in New York, to-day." As Hamilton, although self-confident, was modest, Troup put down his bumper, seized the hero in his big arms and swung him to the middle of the table. Then the three, raising their glasses again, stood in a semi-circle. Hamilton threw back his head and raised his own glass. His hand trembled, and his lips moved for a moment without speaking, after his habit when excited.

"The pledge! The pledge!" cried Fish. "We want it."

"It is this," said Hamilton. "I pledge myself, body and soul and brain, to the most sacred cause of the American colonies. I vow to it all my best energies for the rest of my life. I swear to fight for it with my sword; then when the enemy is driven out, and all the brain in the country needed to reconstruct these tattered colonies and unify them into one great state, or group of allied states, which shall take a respectable place among nations, to give her all that I have learned, all that my brain is capable of learning and conceiving. I believe that I have certain abilities, and I solemnly swear to devote them wholly to *my country*. And I further swear that never, not in a single instance, will I permit my personal ambitions to conflict with what must be the lifelong demands of this country."

He spoke slowly and with great solemnity. The hands of the three young men shook, as they gulped down a little of the wine. Hamilton rarely was serious in manner; even when discussing literature, politics, or any of the great questions before the world, his humour and wit were

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in constant play, a natural gift permitting this while detracting nothing from the weight of his opinions. But his words and his manner were so solemn to-day that they impressed his hearers profoundly, and they all had a vague presentiment of what the unborn Country would owe to that pledge.

"You'll keep that, Alexander," said Fish. "Perhaps it were better for you had you not made it so strong. I burn with patriotism, but I'd not have you sacrificed—"

"I've made my vows," cried Hamilton, gaily, "and I'll not have you mention the fact again that I'm not an American born. Here's not only to liberty, but to a united people under the firmest national constitution ever conceived by man."

"Amen," said Troup, "but that's looking well ahead. Hard as it will be to get England out, it will be harder still to make New York and New England love each other; and when it comes to hitching Massachusetts and Virginia about each other's necks, I vow my imagination won't budge."

"It will come," said Hamilton, "because in no other way can they continue to exist, much less become one of the nations of the earth. This war is but an interlude, no matter how long it may take. Then will come the true warfare of this country—the Great Battle of Ideas, and our real history will begin while it is raging, while we are experimenting; and there will be few greater chapters in any country. I shall take part in that battle; how, it is too soon to know, except that for union I shall never cease to strive until it is a fact. But it has grown cooler. Let us ride up to the village of Harlem and have supper under the trees."

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XVI.

It was not long after this that he wrote the pamphlets in reply to the tracts assailing the Congress and aimed particularly at setting the farmers against the merchants. These tracts were by two of the ablest men on the Tory side, and were clever, subtle, and insinuating. Hamilton's pamphlets were entitled, "A Full Vindication of the Measures of Congress from the Calumnies of Their Enemies," and "The Farmer Refuted; or a More Comprehensive and Impartial View of the Disputes between Great Britain and the Colonies, Intended as a Further Vindication of the Congress." It is not possible to quote these pamphlets, and they can be found in his "Works," but they were remarkable not only for their unanswerable logic, their comprehensive arraignment of Britain, their close discussion of the rights of the colonists under the British Constitution, their philosophical definition of "natural rights," and their reminder that war was inevitable, but for their anticipation of the future resources of the country, particularly in regard to cotton and manufactures, and for the prophecies regarding the treatment of the colonies by Europe. The style was clear, concise, and bold, and with a finish which alone would have suggested a pen pointed by long use.

These pamphlets, which created a profound sensation, were attributed to William Livingston and John Jay, two of the ablest men on the patriot side. That side was profoundly grateful, for they put heart into the timid, decided the wavering, and left the Tory writers without a leg to stand on. Nothing so brilliant had been contributed to the cause.

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It was not long before the public had the author's name. Troup had been present at the writing of the pamphlets, and he called on Dr. Cooper, one day, and announced the authorship with considerable gusto.

"I'll not believe it," exclaimed the president, angrily; "Mr. Jay wrote those pamphlets, and none other. A mere boy like that—it's absurd. Why do you bring me such a story, sir? I don't like this Hamilton, he's too forward and independent—but I have no desire to hear more ill of him."

"He wrote them, sir. Mulligan, in whose house he lives, and I, can prove it. He's the finest brain in this country, and I mean you shall know it."

He left Dr. Cooper foaming, and went to spread the news elsewhere. The effect of his revelation was immediate distinction for Hamilton. He was discussed everywhere as a prodigy of intellect; messages reached him from every colony. "Sears," said Willets, one of the leaders of the Liberty party, "was a warm man, but with little reflection; McDougall was strong-minded; and Jay, appearing to fall in with the measures of Sears, tempered and controlled them; but Hamilton, after these great writings, became our oracle."

Congress met in May, 1775, and word having come that Chatham's conciliation bill had been rejected, and that Britain was about to send an army to suppress the American rebellion, this body assumed sovereign prerogatives. They began at once to organise an army; Washington was elected Commander-in-chief, and they ordered that five thousand men be raised to protect New York, as the point most exposed. The royal troops were expelled, and the city placed in command of General Charles Lee, an English soldier of fortune, who had fought

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in many lands and brought to the raw army an experience which might have been of inestimable service, had he been high-minded, or even well balanced. As it was, he very nearly sacrificed the cause to his jealousy of Washington and to his insane vanity.

Hamilton, meanwhile, published his two pamphlets on the Quebec Bill, and took part in a number of public debates. At one of these, as he rose to speak, a stranger remarked, "What brings that lad here? The poor boy will disgrace himself." But the merchants, who were present in force, listened intently to all he had to say on the non-importation agreement, and admitted the force of his arguments toward its removal, now that war practically had been declared. One of the most interesting of the phenomena in the career of Hamilton was the entire absence of struggle for an early hearing. People recognised his genius the moment they came in contact with it, and older men saw only the extraordinary and mature brain, their judgment quite unaffected by the boyish face and figure. Those who would not admit his great gifts were few, for except in the instances where he incurred jealous hate, he won everybody he met by his charming manner and an entire absence of conceit. He was conscious of his powers, but took them as a matter of course, and thought only of what he would do with them, having no leisure to dwell on their quality. In consequence, he already had a large following of unhesitating admirers, many of them men twice his age, and was accepted as the leading political philosopher of the country.

Dr. Cooper sent for him after his third pamphlet. He, too, was a patriot in his way, and although he bristled whenever Hamilton's name was mentioned, he had come in contact with too many minds not to recognise ability

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of any sort; he knew that Hamilton would be invaluable to the Royalist cause.

"Ask your own price, sir," he said, after suggesting the higher service to which he could devote his pen. "You will find us more liberal—" But Hamilton had bolted. It is impossible to knock down one's venerable president, and his temper was still an active member in the family of his faculties. To the numerous other offers he received from the Tory side he made no reply, beyond inserting an additional sting into his pen when writing for Holt's *Journal.* In the press he was referred to, now, as "The Vindicator of Congress," and it was generally conceded that he had done more to hasten matters to a climax, by preparing and whetting the public mind, than anyone else in America.

There is no doubt that the swiftness and suddenness of Hamilton's conversion, his abrupt descent from a background of study and alien indifference, gave him a clearer and more comprehensive view of the wrongs and needs of the colonists than they possessed themselves. They had been muttering ever since the passage of the first stamp tax, threatening, permitting themselves to be placated, hoping, despairing, hoping again. Hamilton, from the first moment he grasped the subject, saw that there was no hope in ministerial England, no hope in anything but war. Moreover, his courage, naturally of the finest temper, and an audacity which no one had ever discouraged, leapt, and from that far background of the West Indies into an arena where the natives moved in an atmosphere whose damps of doubt and discouragement had corroded them for years. Even among men whose courage and independence were of the first quality, Hamilton's passionate energy, fearlessness of thought, and audacity of expression,

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made him remarkable at once; and they drew a long breath of relief when he uncompromisingly published what they had long agreed upon over the dining-table, or built up the doctrine of resistance with argument as powerful as it was new.

But the time rapidly approached for deeds, and Hamilton had been occupied in other ways than writing pamphlets. During the past six months he had studied tactics and gunnery, and had joined a volunteer corps in order to learn the practical details of military science. All his friends belonged to this corps, which called itself "Hearts of Oak," and looked very charming in green uniforms and leathern caps, inscribed "Freedom or Death." They soon attracted the attention of General Greene, a superior man and an accomplished officer. He took an especial fancy to Hamilton, and great as was their disparity in years, they were close friends until the General's death. It was Greene who first attracted Washington's attention to the youngest of his captains, and Hamilton was able to render the older man, whose services and talents have even yet not been properly recognised by his country, exceptional service. The company exercised in the churchyard of St. George's chapel, early in the morning; for in spite of the swarms of recruits clad in every variety of uniform, deserted houses, and daily flights of the timid into Jersey, earthworks and fortifications, college went on as usual.

It was not long before the "Hearts of Oak" had an opportunity to distinguish themselves. The provincial committee ordered them to remove the cannon stationed at the Battery. In the harbour was the British warship, *Asia,* which immediately sent off a boat to enquire into this proceeding. A large number of armed citizens had

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escorted the little corps to the Battery, and several lost their heads and fired at the boat. There was an immediate broadside from the *Asia*. Three of the militia were wounded, and one fell dead by Hamilton's side. "It is child's play to a hurricane," he thought. "I doubt if a man could have a better training for the battlefield." They removed the guns.

The result of this attack was another explosion of New York's nerves. The Sons of Liberty made it unsafe for a Tory to venture abroad. They marched through the streets shouting vengeance, burning in effigy, and making alarming demonstrations before the handsome houses of certain loyalists. Suddenly, about ten o'clock at night, they were animated by a desire to offer up Dr. Cooper, and they cohered and swarmed down toward King's. Hamilton and Troup happened to be walking in the grounds when the sudden flare of torches and the approaching tide of sound, warned them of the invasion. They ran like deer to head them off, but reached the portico only a moment ahead of the mob, which knew that it must be sudden and swift to be victorious.

"I can talk faster than you," whispered Hamilton, "I'll harangue them, and it won't take Dr. Cooper long to understand and flee through the back door—and may the devil fly away with him."

"A moment!" he cried, "I've something to say, and I may not have another chance, war is so close upon us."

"'Tis young Hamilton," cried someone in the crowd. "Well, make us a speech; we're always glad to hear you, but we'll not go home without old Cooper. Don't think it."

Hamilton never remembered what nonsense he talked that night. Fortunately words always came with a rush, and he could mix up politics, wrongs, the clergy, and

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patriotism, in so picturesque a jumble that an excited crowd would not miss his usual concise logic. "Do you suppose he's gone?" he whispered, pausing to take breath.

"Go on, go on," said Troup, nervously, "I hear someone moving."

"Ah-h-h!"

There was a wild yell from the crowd, and a hoarse roar from above. Hamilton and Troup looked up. Dr. Cooper's infuriated visage, surrounded by a large frill, projected from his bedroom window. "Don't listen to him," he shrieked, thrusting his finger at Hamilton. "He's crazy! He's crazy!"

"The old fool," fumed Troup, "he thinks you're taking your just revenge. If I could get inside—"

Dr. Cooper was jerked back by a friendly hand and the window slammed. "Someone understands," whispered Troup, excitedly; "and they'll have him out in two minutes. Go on, for heaven's sake."

Hamilton, who had been tearful with laughter, began again:—

"I appeal to you, my friends, am I crazy?" Indignant shouts of "No! No!" "Then let me, I pray, make a few remarks on the possibility of holding New York against the advancing fleet, that you can testify to my sanity tomorrow, and save me from whatever unhappy fate this irascible gentleman has in store for me."

"Go ahead! Go ahead!" cried someone in the mob. "We won't let him touch you."

And again Hamilton harangued them, until Troup slipped round to the rear of the big building and returned with word that Dr. Cooper was safely over the back fence and on his way to the *Asia*. When Hamilton announced the flight, there was muttering, but more

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laughter, for the mob was in a better humour than when it came.

"Well, that silver tongue of yours did the old man a good turn to-night, but you sha'n't make fools of us again." And a few days later, when Alexander attempted to head off the same mob as it made for the press of Rivington, the Tory printer, they would not listen to him. But the effort raised him still higher in the estimation of the patriots, for they saw that his love of law and order was as great as his passion for war.

XVII.

In January the convention of New York gave orders that a company of artillery be raised. Hamilton, through Colonel McDougall of the First New York regiment, at once applied for the captaincy, underwent an examination that convinced the Congress of his efficiency, and on the 14th of March was appointed Captain of the Provincial Company of Artillery. McDougall had already applied for "coarse blue cloth," with which to clothe in a semblance of uniform those who already had enlisted, and Hamilton took even better care of them. On May 26th he wrote a brief, pointed, and almost peremptory letter to the Congress, representing the injustice of paying his men less than the wages received by the Continental artillery, adding that there were many marks of discontent in his ranks, and that in the circumstances it was impossible for him to get any more recruits. "On this account I should wish to be immediately authorised to offer the same pay to all who may be inclined to recruit," he wrote. He then went on to demand ten shillings a head for every

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man he should be able to enlist, and that each man of his company be allowed a frock as a bounty.

Congress passed a resolution as soon as the letter was read, granting him all he asked for, but limiting his company to one hundred men. When it was recruited to his satisfaction, it numbered ninety-one, exclusive of himself and his four officers. Besides his Captain-Lieutenant, and first, second, and third Lieutenants, he had three sergeants, three corporals, six bombardiers, three gunners, two drummers, two fifers, a barber, and seventy-one motrosses, or assistant gunners.

He had his troubles, and Congress came to the rescue whenever it received one of his singularly unboyish letters, expressed, moreover, with little more diffidence than if he had been Commander-in-chief. But he knew what he wanted, and he never transcended courtesy; he was evidently a favourite with the Congress. On July 26th he wrote demanding a third more rations for his men, and on the 31st a resolution was passed which marked an end to the disposition to keep his little company on a level with the militia rather than with the regular army. Thereafter he had no further complaints to carry to headquarters; but he was annoyed to discover that one of his officers was a hard drinker, and that the Lieutenant Johnson who had recruited the larger number of his men before he assumed command, had disobeyed orders and enlisted them for a year instead of for the term of war.

Meanwhile, although the very air quivered and every man went armed to the teeth, if a warship fired a gun the streets were immediately filled with white affrighted faces; and although redoubts were building day and night, still Congress came out with no declaration, and the country seemed all nerves and no muscle. The English

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fleet arrived and filled the bay,—a beautiful but alarming sight. Washington came and made New York his head-quarters, called for more troops, and Brooklyn Heights were fortified, lest the English land on Long Island and make an easy descent on the city.

It is doubtful if the Americans have ever appreciated all they owe to Lord Howe. He sat out in the harbour day after day, while they completed their preparations, practically waiting until they announced themselves ready to fight. But no man ever went to the wars with less heart for his work, and he put off the ugly business of mowing down a people he admired, hoping from day to day for an inspired compromise. It was not until after the Declaration of Independence by the Congress, the wild enthusiasm it excited throughout the colonies, and the repeated declination of Washington to confer with Howe as a private citizen, that our Chief received word the British Commander was landing troops on Long Island, near Gravesend.

Several thousand troops were ordered across to reinforce the Brooklyn regiments, and Hamilton's artillery was among them. He stood up in his boat and stared eagerly at the distant ridge of hills, behind which some twenty thousand British were lying on their arms with their usual easy disregard of time, faint, perhaps, under the torrid sun of August. But they were magnificently disciplined and officered, and nothing in history had rivalled the rawness and stubborn ignorance of the American troops. Hamilton had not then met Washington, but he knew from common friends that the Chief was worried and disgusted by what he had seen when inspecting the Brooklyn troops the day before. Greene, second only to Washington in ability, who had been in charge of the

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Brooklyn contingent, knowing every inch of the ground, was suddenly ill. Putnam was in command, and the Chief was justified in his doubt of him, for nothing in the mistakes of the Revolution exceeded his carelessness and his errors of judgment during the battle of Long Island.

There were still two days of chafing inactivity, except in the matter of strengthening fortifications, then, beginning with dawn of the 28th, Hamilton had his baptism of fire in one of the bloodiest battlefields of the Revolution.

The Americans were outgeneralled and outnumbered. Their attention was distracted by land and water, while a British detachment, ten thousand strong, crept over the ridge of hills by night, and through the Bedford Pass, overpowering the guards before their approach was suspected. At dawn they poured down upon the American troops, surprising them, not in one direction, but in flank, in rear, and in front. The green woods swarmed with redcoats, and the Hessians acted with a brutality demoralising to raw troops. Hamilton's little company behaved well, and he was in the thick of the fight all day. The dead were in heaps, the beautiful green slopes were red, there was not a hope of victory, but he exulted that the colonies were fighting at last, and that he was acting; he had grown very tired of talking.

He was driven from his position finally, and lost his baggage and a field-piece, but did not take refuge within the redoubts until nightfall. There, in addition to fatigue, hunger, a bed on the wet ground, and the atmosphere of hideous depression which pressed low upon the new revolutionists, he learned that Troup had been taken prisoner. Then he discovered the depths to which a mercurial nature could descend. He had been fiercely alive all day; the roar of the battle, the plunging horses,

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the quickening stench of the powder, that obsession by the devil of battles which makes the tenderest kill hot and fast, all had made him feel something more than himself, much as he had felt in the hurricane when he had fancied himself on high among the Berserkers of the storm. In his present collapse he felt as if he were in a hole underground.

Washington arrived on the scene next morning, and for forty-eight hours he barely left the saddle, encouraging the wretched men and exercising an unceasing vigilance. For two days they were inactive in the rain. The Chief, having assured himself that the British aimed to obtain command of the river, determined upon the retreat which ranks as one of the greatest military achievements in history. On the night of the 29th, under cover of a heavy fog, the feat of embarking nine thousand men, with all the ammunition and field-pieces of the army, and ferrying them across the East River with muffled oars, was accomplished within earshot of the enemy. Washington rode from regiment to regiment, superintending and encouraging, finally taking his stand at the head of the ferry stairs. He stood there until the last man had embarked at four in the morning. The last man was Hamilton. His was one of the regiments, and the rear one, detailed to cover the retreat, to attract fire to itself if necessary. His position was on the Heights, just outside the intrenchments, at the point closest to the enemy. For nine hours he hardly moved, his ear straining for the first indication that the British heard the soft splashing of bare feet in the mud. The fog was so thick that he could see nothing, not even the battalions of retreating Americans; the forms of his own men were vague and grey of outline. He never had fancied an isolation so complete, but his

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nerves stood the strain; when they began to mutter he reminded himself of Mr. Cruger's store and St. Croix. There was a false summons, and after turning his back upon his post with a feeling of profound relief, he was obliged to return and endure it for two hours longer. Did the fog lift he would never see another. It was dawn when a messenger came with the news that his turn positively had come, and he marched his men down the slope to the ferry stairs. He passed close enough to Washington to see his dejected, haggard face.

On the 15th of the following month, after much correspondence with Congress, discussion, and voting, it was determined to abandon New York City, and intrench the army on the Heights of Harlem. Hamilton was bitterly disappointed; he wanted to defend the city, and so had three of the generals, but they were overruled, and the march began on a blazing Sunday morning. It was not only the army that marched, but all the inhabitants of the town who had not escaped to the Jersey shore. The retreat was under the command of General Putnam, and guided through all the intricacies of those thirteen winding miles by his aide-de-camp, Aaron Burr. The last man in the procession was Alexander Hamilton.

"So, you're covering again, Alexander," said Fish, as he passed him on his way to his own regiment,—the New York, of which he was brigade-major. "You can't complain that your adopted country doesn't make use of you. By the way, Troup is in the Jersey prison-ship, safe and sound."

"Can't we exchange him?" asked Hamilton, eagerly, "Do you think General Washington would listen to us?"

"If we have a victory. I shouldn't care to approach him at present. God! This is an awful beginning. The

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whole army is ready to dig its own grave. The only person of the lot who has any heart in him to-day is little Burr. He's like to burst with importance because he leads and we follow. He's a brave little chap, but such a bantam one must laugh. Well, I hate to leave you here, the very last man to be made a target of. You won't be rash?" he added anxiously.

"No, granny," said Hamilton, whose gaiety had revived as he heard of Troup's safety. "And I'd not exchange my position for any."

"Good-bye."

Handshakes in those days were solemn. Fish feared that he never should see Hamilton again, and his fear was close to being realised.

It was a long, hot, dusty, miserable march; some lay down by the wayside and died. Hamilton had been bred in the heat of the Tropics, but he had ridden always, and to-day he was obliged to trudge the thirteen miles on foot. He had managed to procure horses for his guns and caissons, but none for himself and his officers.

It was on the Hoagland farm at the junction of the Kingsbridge and Bloomingdale roads that a serious skirmish occurred, and Hamilton and his men stood the brunt of it. The tired column was almost through the pass, when a detachment of British light infantry suddenly appeared on the right. Fortunately the cannon had not entered the pass, and were ready for action. Hamilton opened fire at once. There was a sharp engagement, but the British were finally driven off. Then the defenders of the column made good their own retreat, for they knew that by now the redcoats were swarming over the island.

Toward night a cold wind and rain swept in from the ocean. When the little army finally reached Harlem

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Heights they were obliged to sleep on the wet ground without so much as a tent to cover them, then arise at dawn and dig trenches. But by night they were men again, they had ceased to be dogged machines: the battle of Harlem Heights had been fought and won. The British had begun the battle in the wrong place and at the wrong time, and all the natural advantages of that land of precipices, forests, gorges, wooded hills, and many ravines, were with the Americans. Again Hamilton worked in the thick of the fight during the four hours it lasted, but like everybody else he went to sleep happy.

XVIII.

He rose at dawn the next morning, and rousing his men, set them at work throwing up redoubts. He was standing some distance from them, watching the sun rise over the great valley they had been forced to abandon, with its woods and beautiful homes, now the quarters of British officers, when every nerve in his body became intensely aware that someone was standing behind him. He knew that it was a man of power before he whirled round and saw Washington.

"This is Captain Hamilton?" said the Chief, holding out his hand. "General Greene spoke to me, weeks ago, about you, but I have been in no mood until to-day for amenities. I know of your part in the retreat from Long Island, and I noticed you as you passed me on the ferry stairs. What a lad you are! I am very proud of you."

"I had asked for no reward, sir," cried Hamilton, with a smile so radiant that Washington's set face caught a momentary reflection from it, and he moved a step

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nearer, "but I feel as if you had pinned an order on my coat."

"I have heard a great deal more about you," said Washington, "and I want to know you. Will you come up and have breakfast with me?"

"Oh, yes, I will," said Hamilton, with such seriousness that they both laughed. Hamilton's personal pride was too great to permit him to feel deeply flattered by the attentions of anyone, but the halo about Washington's head was already in process of formation; he stood aloft, whether successful or defeated, a strong, lonely, splendid figure, and he had fired Hamilton's imagination long since. At that time he was ready to worship the great Chief with all a boy's high enthusiasm, and although he came to know him too well to worship, he loved him, save at intervals, always. As for Washington, he loved Hamilton then and there, and it is doubtful if he ever loved anyone else so well. When they were alone he called him "my boy," an endearment he never gave another.

On that September morning they breakfasted together, and talked for hours, beginning a friendship which was to be of the deepest consequences to the country they both were striving to deliver.

During the following month Hamilton had much leisure, and he spent it in the library of the Morris house, which its owner, a royalist, had abandoned on the approach of the American troops, fleeing too hurriedly to take his books. The house was now General Washington's headquarters, and he invited Hamilton to make what use of the library he pleased. It was a cool room, and he found there many of the books he had noted down for future study. He also wrote out a synopsis of a political and commercial history of Great Britain. As the proclivities

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and furnishing of a mind like Hamilton's cannot fail to interest the students of mankind, a digression may be pardoned in favour of this list of books he made for future study, and of the notes scattered throughout his pay book:—

Smith's History of New York; Leonidas; View of the Universe; Millot's History of France; Memoirs of the House of Brandenburgh; Review of the Characters of the Principal Nations of Europe; Review of Europe; History of Prussia; History of France; Lassel's Voyage through Italy; Robertson's Charles V; Present State of Europe; Grecian History; Baretti's Travels; Bacon's Essays; Philosophical Transactions; Entick's History of the Late War; European Settlements in America; Winn's History of America.

The Dutch in Greenland have from 150 to 200 sail and ten thousand seamen. . . . It is ordered that in their public prayers they pray that it should please God to bless the Government, the Lords, the States, and their great and small fisheries.

Hamburg and Germany have a balance against England—they furnish her with large quantities of linen.

Trade with France greatly against England. . . . The trade with Flanders in favour of England. . . . A large balance in favour of Norway and Denmark.

Rates of Exchange with the several Nations in 52, viz., To Venice, Genoa, Leghorn, Amsterdam, Hamburgh. To Paris—Loss, Gain.

Postlethwaite supposes the quantity of cash necessary to carry on the circulation in a state one third of the rents to the land proprietors, or one ninth of the whole product of the lands. See the articles, Cash and Circulation.

The par between land and labour is twice the quantity of land whose product will maintain the labourer. In France one acre and a half will maintain one. In England three, owing to the difference in the manner of living.

Aristotle's Politics, chap. 6, definition of money, &c.

The proportion of gold and silver, as settled by Sir Isaac Newton's proposition, was 1 to 14. It was generally through Europe 1 to 15. In China I believe it is 1 to 10.

It is estimated that the labour of twenty-five persons, on an average, will maintain a hundred in all the necessaries of life.

Postlethwaite, in his time, supposes six millions of people in Eng-

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land. The ratio of increase has been found by a variety of observations to be, that 100,000 people augment annually, one year with another to —.

Mr. Kerseboom, agreeing with Dr. Halley, makes the number of people thirty-five times the number of births in a year.

Extracts from Demosthenes' Orations.

Philippic. "As a general marches at the head of his troops, so ought wise politicians, if I dare use the expression, to march at the head of affairs; insomuch that they ought not to wait *the event*, to know what measures to take; but the measures which they have taken ought to produce the *event.*"

"Where attack him? it will be said. Ah, Athenians—war, war, itself will discover to you his weak sides, if you will seek them."

Sublimely simple. Vide Long. C. 16.

Are the limits of the several states and the acts on which they are founded ascertained, and are our ministers provided with them? What intelligence has been given to Congress by our ministers of the designs, strength by sea and land, actual interests and views of the different powers in Europe?

The government established (by Lycurgus) remained in vigour about five hundred years, till a thirst of empire tempted the Spartans to entertain foreign troops, and introduce Persian gold to maintain them; then the institutions of Lycurgus fell at once, and avarice and luxury succeeded.

He (Numa) was a wise prince, and went a great way in civilising the Romans. The chief engine he employed for this purpose was religion, which could alone have sufficient empire over the minds of a barbarous and warlike people to engage them to cultivate the arts of peace.

Dr. Halley's Table of Observations exhibiting the probabilities of life; containing an account of the whole number of people of Breslau, capital of Silesia, and the number of those of every age, from one to a hundred. (Here follows the table with comments by A. H.)

When the native money is worth more than the par in foreign, exchange is high; when worth less, it is low.

Portugal trade—Spanish trade—Artificers—Money—Exchange—Par of exchange—Balance of trade—Manufactures—Foundry—Coin—Gold—Silver—Naval Power—Council of trade—Fishery.

Money coined in England from the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

Quere. Would it not be advisable to let all taxes, even those imposed by the States, be collected by persons of Congressional ap-

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pointment; and would it not be advisable to pay the collectors so much per cent. on the sums collected?

Hamilton was nineteen at this time, and while there are many instances of mental precocity in the history of mankind, it is doubtful if there is a parallel case of so great a *range* of intellectual curiosity, or such versatility combined with pursuit of knowledge as distinct from information. But the above notes are chiefly significant as showing that long before he could have dreamed of directing the finances of the United States, while he was wild with delight at the prospect of military excitement and glory, a part of his mind was imperiously attracted to the questions which were to become identified in American history with his name.

Washington often came in and sat for an hour with him; and although they talked military science and future campaigns invariably,—for Washington was a man of little reading and his thoughts moved in a constant procession to one tune,—this was perhaps the happiest period of their intercourse. The Chief demanded nothing, and his young friend was free to give or not, as he chose. In that interval nothing gave Hamilton such pleasure as to see Washington come into the cool library, his face softening.

"You have a streak of light in you that never goes out," said the man of many burdens once. "When I catch a spark of it, I am cheered for the rest of the day. When I am close to it for a time, I can feel the iron lid on my spirits lifting as if it were on a bubbling pot. I believe you are something more than human."

During the first of these conversations Hamilton suggested the advisability of keeping up the spirits of the raw troops by drawing the enemy in separate detachments

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into constant skirmishes, a plan in which the Americans were sure to have every advantage; and this policy was pursued until Washington fell back into Westchester County.

The American troops under Washington numbered about nineteen thousand men, in one-third of whom the Chief felt something like confidence. Many were grumbling at the prospect of a winter in the discomforts of camp life; others were rejoicing that their time of service drew to a close; all were raw. Nevertheless, he determined to give the British battle on the shore of the Bronx River, where they were camped with the intention of cutting him off from the rest of the country.

Both armies were near White Plains on the morning of the 28th of October. Most of the Americans were behind the breastworks they had thrown up, and the British were upon the hills below, on the opposite side of the Bronx. On the American side of the stream was an eminence called Chatterton's Hill, and on the evening of the 27th Colonel Haslet was stationed on this height, with sixteen hundred men, in order to prevent the enfilading of the right wing of the army. Early the next morning McDougall was ordered to reinforce Haslet with a small corps and two pieces of artillery under Hamilton, and to assume general command.

At ten o'clock the British Army began its march toward the village, but before they reached it, Howe determined that Chatterton's Hill should be the first point of attack, and four thousand troops under Leslie moved off to dislodge the formidable-looking force on the height.

Hamilton placed his two guns in battery on a rocky ledge about halfway down the hill, and bearing directly upon that part of the Bronx which the British were approaching. He was screened from the enemy by a small

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grove of trees. The Hessians, who were in the lead, refused to wade the swollen stream, and the onslaught was checked that a bridge might hastily be thrown together for their accommodation. Hamilton waited a half-hour, then poured out his fire. The bridge was struck, the workmen killed, the Hessians fell back in a panic. Leslie appealed to the loyalty of the British, forded the river at another point, and rushed up the hill with bayonets fixed, resolved to capture the guns. But the guns flashed with extraordinary rapidity. Both the British and the watching Americans were amazed. There were no tin canisters and grape-shot in the American army, even the round shot were exhausted. Loading cannon with musket balls was a slow process; but Hamilton was never without resource. He stood the cannon on end, filled his three-cornered hat with the balls, and loaded as rapidly as had he leaped a century. His guns mowed down the British in such numbers that Leslie fell back, and joining the Hessian grenadiers and infantry, who had now crossed the stream, charged up the southwestern declivity of the hill and endeavoured to turn McDougall's right flank. McDougall's advance opposed them hotly, while slowly retreating toward the crown of the eminence. The British cavalry attacked the American militia on the extreme right, and the raw troops fled ignominiously. McDougall, with only six hundred men and Hamilton's two guns, sustained an unequal conflict for an hour, twice repulsing the British light infantry and cavalry. But the attack on his flank compelled him to give way and retreat toward the intrenchments. Under cover of a heavy rainstorm and of troops despatched in haste, he retreated in good order with his wounded and artillery, leaving the victors in possession of a few inconsiderable breastworks.

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Fort Washington was betrayed, and fell on the 16th of November. Then began that miserable retreat of the American army through the Jerseys, with the British sometimes in full pursuit, sometimes merely camping on the trail of the hapless revolutionists. For Washington's force was now reduced to thirty-five hundred, and they were ragged, half fed, and wretched in mind and body. Many had no shoes, and in one regiment there was not a pair of trousers. They left the moment their leave expired, and recruits were drummed up with great difficulty. Washington was obliged to write eight times to General Lee, who was at North Castle with a considerable force, before he was able to hope for relief in that quarter.

Hamilton had a horse at times, at others not. But his vitality was proof against even those endless days and nights of marching and countermarching, through forests and swamps, in the worst of late autumn and winter weather; and he kept up the spirits of his little regiment, now reduced from bullets, exposure, and the expiration of service to thirty men. Nevertheless, he held the British in check at the Raritan River while the Americans destroyed the bridge, and when Washington, after having crossed the Delaware, determined to recross it on Christmas night and storm Trenton, he was one of the first to be chosen, with what remained of his men and guns.

As they crossed the Delaware that bitter night, the snow stinging and blinding, the river choked with blocks of ice, Hamilton for the first time thought on St. Croix with a pang of envy. But it was the night for their purpose, and all the world knows the result. The victory was followed on the 3d of January by the capture of Princeton; and here Hamilton's active military career came to an end for the present.

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Well do I recollect the day [wrote a contemporary] when Hamilton's company marched into Princeton. It was a model of discipline. At their head was a boy, and I wondered at his youth; but what was my surprise, when, struck with his slight figure, he was pointed out to me as that Hamilton of whom we had heard so much.

I noticed [a veteran officer said many years after] a youth, a mere stripling, small, slender, almost delicate in frame, marching beside a piece of artillery, with a cocked hat pulled down over his eyes, apparently lost in thought; with his hand resting on a cannon, and every now and again patting it as if it were a favourite horse or a pet plaything.

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BOOK III.

THE LITTLE LION.

I.

HAMILTON'S body succumbed to the climax of Trenton and Princeton upon months of hardship and exposure, and he was in hospital for a week with a rheumatic fever. But Troup, whose exchange had been effected, was with him most of the time, and his convalescence was made agreeable by many charming women. He was not the only brilliant young man in the army, for Troup, Fish, Burr, Marshall, were within a few months or, at most, a year or two of his age, and there were many others; men had matured early in that hot period before the Revolution, when small boys talked politics, and even the women thought of little else; but Hamilton, through no fault of his, had inspired his friends with the belief that he was something higher than human, and they never tired of sounding his praises. Moreover, Washington had not hesitated to say what he thought of him, and the mere fact that he had won the affection of that austere Chieftain was enough to give him celebrity. At all events, he was a dazzling figure, and pretty women soothed many a weary hour. As for Troup, who was unpleasantly anatomical, he had a fresh story for every day of the horrors of the

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prison cattle-ship *Mentor,* where half the prisoners had died of filth, starvation, and fever, from putrid water and brutal treatment.

But never was there a more impatient invalid than Hamilton. He was astonished and disgusted that his body should defy his mind, and at the first moment possible he was up and about his duties with the army at Morristown. Troup was ordered to join the army under Gates in the North.

Morristown was a natural fortress, a large fertile valley, protected by precipitous hills and forests, yet with defiles known to the Americans, through which they could retreat if necessary. It was within striking distance of New Brunswick and Amboy, in which towns Washington kept the British cooped up for months, not permitting them to cut a stick of forest wood without fighting for it. "Here was seen," to quote Hamilton, "the spectacle of a powerful army straitened within narrow limits by the phantom of a military force, and never permitted to transgress those limits with impunity; in which skill supplied the place of means, and disposition was the substitute for an army.

Congress had invested Washington with such extraordinary powers after the brilliant exploit at Trenton, that in Europe he was called "The Dictator of America." Therein lay the sole cause of the ultimate victory of the Revolutionists, and had the States been more generous, and less jealous of delegating powers to Congress, he would have driven out the British in short order.

Mrs. Washington had joined her General—she kept an eye on him—at Freeman's Tavern, which had been converted into comfortable headquarters, and he was happy in his military family: Colonel Harrison, indefatigable and

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fearless, affectionately known as "Old Secretary;" Tench Tilghman of Maryland, young, accomplished, cheerful, devoted to Washington and serving without pay, for his fortune was considerable; Richard Kidder Meade, sprightly, enthusiastic, always willing to slave; and John Fitzgerald, —all in an attitude of perpetual adoration. But he lacked a secretary of the requisite ability, and as soon as he heard of Hamilton's return to camp he sent for him.

Hamilton was feeling almost well, and he walked rapidly across the village green to headquarters, delighted at the prospect of seeing Washington again. He had acquired a military air and walked more erectly than ever, for he was somewhat sensitive of his juvenile appearance. He found Washington in a front room on the second floor. The General wore his usual blue and buff, and looked less harassed and worn than when he had last seen him. He rose and shook hands warmly with Hamilton, who thanked him again for the messages he had received while in hospital.

"I would have had you brought here if there had been any place to make you comfortable; and I am going to ask you to come and live with me now —as my aide and secretary."

Hamilton sprang to his feet impetuously. "Oh, sir!" he exclaimed, "I don't want to leave the regular line of promotion! I don't want to leave my men. I'm much attached to them. And I'll not deny my ambition, sir; I want opportunities to distinguish myself. I've already refused two generals. This war will last for years. There is no reason in the world why I should not be a general in three."

"No," said Washington, "there is none; there is every possibility of your becoming one of the most brilliant

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figures on the revolutionary battlefields. I admit that, and I understand your ambition. Nevertheless, I think I can prove to you that there is another way in which you can serve your country better. I know your uncompromising sense of duty and your high patriotism, and I am sure you will accept my invitation when I prove to you that while there are hundreds to fight valorously, even brilliantly, there is scarcely a man I can get to write my letters who can do more than punctuate properly or turn a sentence neatly. You must know the inexpressible value of a brilliant accomplished versatile secretary, with a brain capable of grasping every question that arises—and you can imagine how many of that sort have come my way. I have been driven nearly distracted, dictating, explaining, revising—when I have so much else to think of. Besides the constant correspondence with the Congress and the States, something else is always turning up—to-day it is the exchange of prisoners, a most important and delicate matter. Were you my secretary, you would also be my brain: a word would be sufficient. I could trust you so implicitly that if matters pressed I could confidently sign my name to whatever you wrote without reading it over. There is no one else living of whom I can say that. You are the most useful young man in America, and if you will give your great brain to this country from this time on, she will be far more grateful to you than if you merely continued to fight, splendidly as you have done that. And *I* need you—I have no words to tell you how much."

"Sir," said Hamilton, deeply touched, "no human being could withstand such an appeal, and your words of praise are glory enough. I will come as soon as you say, and do the best I can."

"Come at once. The British persist in treating us as

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rebels. It is for you, with your inspired pen, to force and coax them to regard us with the respect an educated thinking people—not a horde of ignorant rebels, as they imagine—deserve. If you do that, you will do a greater service to your country than if you rose to be first in military rank. Here are some notes. When you have finished, write to Congress and ask for the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel; and move up here to-day, if possible. I cannot tell you how happy I shall be to have you a member of my family."

Washington had won his point. A shrewd judge of men, he had calculated upon Hamilton succumbing to an appeal to his sense of patriotic duty—the strongest passion in his passionate nature. Much as he loved Hamilton, he had no hesitation in using him, and our petted young hero was to learn what work meant for the first time in his life. He wrote most of the day, often half the night; but although he chafed angrily at the confinement, beat many a tattoo on the floor with his heels, and went for a hard ride more than once that he might keep his temper, the result was that mass of correspondence, signed "George Washington," which raised the commander of the American forces so high in the estimation of Europe, adding to his military renown the splendour of a profound and luminous intellect.

There was, also, some correspondence with the Congress regarding the disposition of his artillery men. He insisted upon definite provision for them, and they were permitted to enlist in the Continental Army. They loved him, and the final parting on March 18th, with cannon as well as men!——made him ill for half a day.

Otherwise his life at Headquarters was very pleasant. Tilghman and Meade became two of the most congenial

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friends he ever made. The tavern was comfortable, and he had a room to himself for a time. The dining-room reunions were agreeable in spite of their formality. Besides the amiable military family, and the most motherly of women, who knit him stockings and kept his wardrobe in order, there were frequent visitors. The Livingston girls were spending the winter with their aunt, Lady Sterling, and, with their beautiful cousin, the Lady Kitty Alexander, often drove over to a five o'clock dinner or the more informal supper. The Boudinots and Morgans, the generals in camp at Morristown and their wives, and the more distinguished officers, were frequently dined at Headquarters. Washington sat halfway in the table's length, with Mrs. Washington opposite. Hamilton was placed at the head of the table on the day of his arrival, a seat he retained while a member of the family. The Chief encouraged him to talk, and it must be confessed that he talked from the time he sat down till the meal finished. His ideas were always on the rush, and talking was merely thinking aloud. As he expressed himself with wit and elegance, and on subjects which interested them all profoundly, illuminating everything he touched, old men and young would lean forward and listen with respect to the wisdom of a young man who was yet an infant in the eyes of the law. How he escaped being insufferably spoiled can only be explained by the ceaseless activity of his brain, and the fact that the essence of which prigs are made was not in him. That he was utterly without commonplace conceit is indisputable, for he was the idol of the family. Harrison christened him "The Little Lion," a name his friends used for their aptest designation as long as he lived, and assumed a paternal relation which finished only with the older man's

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death. The Lady-in-chief made such a pet of him that he was referred to in the irreverent Tory press as "Mrs. Washington's Tom-cat."

"Alexander," said Kitty Livingston to him, one day, "have a care. You are too fortunate. The jealous gods will smite you."

But Hamilton, thinking of those terrible months in the previous year, of mental anxiety and physical hardship, when, in bitter weather, he had often gone hungry and insufficiently clothed, and of his present arduous duties, concluded there was a fine balance in his affairs which doubtless would placate the gods.

II.

In May and July there were illustrious additions to Washington's family,—John Laurens and Lafayette. Both became the intimate friends of Hamilton, the former one of the few passionate attachments of his life. Although Hamilton was by no means indifferent to the affection he inspired in nine-tenths of the people he met, he did not himself love easily. He was too analytical, he saw people too precisely as they were, and his acquaintance with human nature had made him too cynical to permit the flood-gates of his affections to open except under uncommon stress. He dreaded disappointment. For Troup, Fish, Stevens, Meade, and Tilghman he had a deep affection and served their interests ardently; for Washington a contradictory budget of emotions, which were sometimes to be headed "respectful affection," at others "irritated resentment," now and again a moment of adora-

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tion. While he could not pay sufficient tribute to Washington's magnanimity and generosity, he had by now seen him in too many tempers, had been ground too fine in his greedy machine, to think on him always with unqualified enthusiasm. Lafayette, brilliant, volatile, accomplished, bubbling with enthusiasm for the cause of Liberty, and his own age within a few months, he liked sincerely and always. There was no end to the favours he did him, and Lafayette loved no one better in his long and various career. Women, Hamilton fancied sharply and forgot quickly.

But Laurens, the "young Bayard of the Revolution," fresh from the colleges and courts of Europe, a man so handsome that, we are told, people experienced a certain shock when he entered the room, courtly, accomplished to the highest degree, of flawless character, with a mind as noble and elevated as it was intellectual, and burning with the most elevated patriotism—he took Hamilton by storm, capturing judgement as well as heart, and loving him as ardently in return.

Like Hamilton, Laurens was of Huguenot descent; he was born in South Carolina, of a distinguished family. Against the expressed wish of his father he had returned to America, made his way to Headquarters and offered his services to Washington, who immediately attached him to his military household. The unhappiest of men, praying for death on every battlefield, he lived long enough to distinguish himself by a bravery so reckless, by such startling heroic feats, that he was, beyond all question, the popular young hero of the Revolution. He worshipped Washington as one might worship a demi-god, and risked his life for him on two occasions. But Hamilton was the friend of his life; the bond between them was romantic

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and chivalrous. Each burned to prove the strength of his affection, to sacrifice himself for the other. Laurens slaved at Washington's less important correspondence, and Hamilton's turn came later. The age has passed for such friendships; but at that time, when young men were nurtured on great ideas, when they were sacrificing themselves in a sacred cause, and had seen next to nothing of the frivolities of life, they were understandable enough.

Hamilton was obliged to share his room with both the young men, and they slept on three little cots in a small space. When the nights were insufferably hot they would go out and lie on the grass and talk until they were in a condition to sleep anywhere. Hamilton would forecast the next movement of the enemy; Laurens and Lafayette would tell all they knew about military science in Europe; and then they would discuss the future of the liberated country and the great ideals which must govern her. And when men can be idealistic while fighting the Jersey mosquito, it must be admitted that they are of the stuff to serve their country well.

But all this delightful intercourse was interrupted in August. Washington gave battle to the British at Brandywine, was defeated, and in the following month surprised it at Germantown, and was defeated again. Nevertheless, he had astonished the enemy with his strength and courage so soon after a disastrous battle. To hold Philadelphia was impossible, however, and the British established themselves in the Capital of the colonies, making, as usual, no attempt to follow up their victories.

Washington went into temporary quarters near the village of Whitemarsh. His own were in a baronial hall at the head of a beautiful valley. Old trees shaded the house, and a spring of pure water bubbled in a fountain

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before the door. The men were encamped on the hills at the north.

There was a great hall through the centre of the mansion, and here Washington held his audiences and councils of war. The house throughout was of extreme elegance, and much to the taste of the younger members of the family, particularly of Hamilton, who spent the greater part of his leisure in the library. But his enjoyment of this uncommon luxury was brief.

Washington must have reinforcements or his next engagement might be his last. There was but one source from which he could obtain a considerable supply, and that was from the army of Gates in the North. But Gates was swollen with the victory of Saratoga and the capture of Burgoyne, and was suspected to be in the thick of an intrigue to dethrone Washington and have himself proclaimed Commander-in-chief. At the moment he was the idol of the army, and of the northern and eastern States, for his victories were tangible and brilliant, while Washington's surer processes were little appreciated. Therefore to get troops from him would be little less difficult than to get them from Lord Howe, short of a positive command, and this prerogative Washington did not think it politic to use. He called a council of war, and when it was over he went to his private office and sent for Alexander Hamilton.

He looked haggard, as if from sleepless nights, and for a moment after Hamilton entered the room, although he waved his hand at a chair, he stared at him without speaking. Hamilton divined what was coming—he attended all councils of war—and sat forward eagerly. The prospect of a holiday from clerical work would alone have

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filled him with youth, and he knew how great a service he might be able to render the cowering Republic.

"Hamilton," said Washington, finally, "you are as much in my secret thoughts as I am myself. If I attempted to deceive you, you would divine what I withheld. It is a relief to speak frankly to you. I dare not demand these troops from Gates, because there is more than a possibility he would defy me, and that the Congress and a large part of the army would sustain him. He has given sufficient evidence of his temper in sending me no official notice of the battle of Saratoga. But unless I am to meet with overwhelming disaster here, I must have reinforcements. It may be possible to extract these by diplomacy, and I have selected you for the mission, because I feel sure that you will not forget the issues at stake for a moment, because you never lose your head, and because you will neither be overawed by Gates's immediate splendour, nor will you have any young desire to assert the authority which I give you as a last resort. There is another point: If you find that Gates purposes to employ his troops on some expedition, by the prosecution of which the common cause will be more benefited than by their being sent down to reinforce this army, you must suspend your consideration for me. God knows I am tender of my reputation, and I have no wish to be disgraced, but we are or should be fighting for a common cause and principle, and should have little thought of individual glory. However, I do not believe in the disinterestedness of Gates, nor in his efficiency on a large scale. But I leave everything in your hands."

Hamilton stood up, his chest rising, and stared at his Chief.

"Sir," he said, after a moment, "do you appreciate

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that you are placing your good name and your future in my hands?" For a moment he realised that he was not yet of age.

"You are the only being to whom I can confide them, and who can save this terrible situation."

"And you have the magnanimity to say that if Gates has a chance of other victories to let him go unhindered?" He had one of his moments of adoration and self-abnegation for this man, whose particular virtues, so little called upon in ordinary affairs, gave him so lonely a place among men.

Washington jerked his head. There was nothing more to say. Hamilton's head dropped for a moment, as if he felt the weight of an iron helmet, and his lips moved rapidly.

"Are you saying your prayers when your lips work like that?" asked Washington, crossly.

Hamilton threw back his head with a gay laugh. His eyes were sparkling, his nostrils dilating; his whole bearing was imperious and triumphant. "Never mind that. I'll undertake this mission gladly, sir, and I think I'll not fail. My old friend Troup is his aide. He will advise me of many things. I'll bring you back those regiments, sir. One way or another a thing can always be managed."

The light in Hamilton's face was reflected on Washington's. "You are my good genius," he said shortly. "Take care of yourself. You will have to ride hard, for there is no time to lose, but be careful not to take cold. I shall give you orders in writing. Come back as soon as you can. I believe I am not lacking in courage, but I always have most when you are close by."

There is a print somewhere representing Hamilton set-

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ting forth on this mission. He is mounted on a handsome white horse, and wears a long green cloak, one end thrown over a shoulder. His three-cornered hat is pulled low over his eyes. In the rear is an orderly.

He started on the 30th of October, riding hard through the torn desolate country, toward Newburg on the Hudson. He was three days making the distance, although he snatched but a few hours' rest at night, and but a few moments for each meal. From Newburg he crossed to Fishkill and, acting on his general instructions, ordered Putnam to despatch southward three brigades; and on his own account despatched seven hundred Jersey militia on the same expedition.

He then started hot and hard for Albany, a dangerous as well as exhausting journey, for neither savage tribes nor redcoats could be far in the distance. His mental anxiety by now wore as severely as the physical strain. None knew better than he that his talents were not for diplomacy. He was too impatient, too imperious, too direct for its sinuous methods. On the other hand, he had a theory that a first-rate mind could, for a given time, be bent in any direction the will commanded, and he had acquired an admirable command of his temper. But the responsibility was terrific, and he was half ill when he reached Albany. He presented himself at General Gates's headquarters at once.

Gates, like Lee, was a soldier of fortune; and low-born, vain, weak, and insanely ambitious. He had been advised of Hamilton's coming, and had no intention of giving Washington an opportunity to rival his own achievements and reëstablish himself with the army and the Congress. He received Hamilton surrounded by several of his military family; and for the first time our fortunate hero

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encountered in high places active enmity and dislike. He had incurred widespread jealousy on account of his influence over Washington, and for the important part he was playing in national affairs. To the enemies of the Commander-in-chief he represented that exalted personage, and was particularly obnoxious. Never was a youth in a more difficult position.

"I cannot expose the finest arsenal in America," said Gates, pompously, "to the possibility of destruction. Sir Henry Clinton may return at any minute. Nor could I enterprise against Ticonderoga were my army depleted. Nor can I leave the New England States open to the ravages and the depredations of the enemy."

These statements made no impression on Hamilton, and he argued brilliantly and convincingly for his object, but Gates was inflexible. He would send one brigade and no more.

Hamilton retired, uneasy and dejected. Gates had an air of omnipotence, and his officers had not concealed their scorn. He hesitated to use his authority, for a bold defiance on the part of Gates might mean the downfall of Washington, perhaps of the American cause. That Washington was practically the American army, Hamilton firmly believed. If he fell, it was more than likely that the whole tottering structure would crumble.

Another reason inclined him not to press Gates too far. He had been able to order seventy-seven hundred troops from Fishkill, which was more than Washington had expected, although by no means so many as he needed. He therefore wrote to the Chief at length, sent for Troup, and threw himself on the bed; he was well-nigh worn out.

Troup was already in search of him, and met the messenger. Big and bronzed, bursting with spirits, he seemed

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to electrify the very air of the room he burst into without ceremony. Hamilton sat up and poured out his troubles.

"You have an affinity for posts of danger," said Troup. "I believe you to be walking over a powder-mine here. I am not in their confidence, for they know what I think of Washington, but I believe there is a cabal on foot, and that Gates may be in open rebellion any minute. But he's a coward and a bully. Treat him as such. Press your point and get your troops. He is but the tool of a faction, and I doubt if they could make him act when it came to the point. He wants to make another grand coup before striking. Look well into what regiment he gives you. Which are you to have?"

"General Patterson's."

"I thought as much. It is the weakest of the three now here, consists of but about six hundred rank and file fit for duty. There are two hundred militia with it, whose time of service is so near expiring that they will have dissolved ere you reach Headquarters."

Hamilton had sprung to his feet in a fury. He forgot his pains, and let his temper fly with satisfaction in the exercise. "If that is the case," he cried, when he had finished his anathema of Gates, "I'll have the men;" and he dashed at his writing materials. But he threw his pen aside in a moment. "I'll wait till to-morrow for this. I must be master of myself. Tell me of Saratoga. You distinguished yourself mightily, and no one was more glad than I."

Troup talked while Hamilton rested. That evening he took him to call at the Schuyler mansion, high on the hill.

Philip Schuyler was the great feudal lord of the North. He had served the colonial cause in many ways, and at

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the outbreak of the Revolution had been one of its hopes and props. But brilliant as his exploits had been, the intrigues of Gates, after the fall of Ticonderoga, had been successful, and he was deprived of the army of the North before the battle of Saratoga. The day of exoneration came, but at present he was living quietly at home, without bitterness. A man of the most exalted character, he drew added strength from adversity, to be placed at the service of the country the moment it was demanded. Mrs. Schuyler, herself a great-granddaughter of the first patroon, Killian Van Rensselaer, was a woman of strong character, an embodied type of all the virtues of the Dutch pioneer housewife. She had a lively and turbulent family of daughters, however, and did not pretend to manage them. The spirit of our age is feeble and bourgeois when compared with the independence and romantic temper of the stormy days of this Republic's birth. Liberty was in the air; there was no talk but of freedom and execration of tyrants; young officers had the run of every house, and Clarissa Harlowe was the model for romantic young "females." Angelica Schuyler, shortly before the battle of Saratoga, had run off with John Barker Church, a young Englishman of distinguished connections, at present masquerading under the name of Carter; a presumably fatal duel having driven him from England. Subsequently, both Peggy and Cornelia Schuyler climbed out of windows and eloped in a chaise and four, although there was not an obstacle worth mentioning to union with the youths of their choice. It will shock many good mothers of the present day to learn that all these marriages were not only happy, but set with the brilliance of wealth and fashion. When Hamilton was introduced to the famous white hall of the Schuyler mansion on the hill, Cornelia

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and Peggy were still free in all but fancy; Elizabeth, by far the best behaved, was the hope of Mrs. Schuyler's well-regulated soul and one of the belles of the Revolution. Hamilton was enchanted with her, although his mind was too weighted for love. Her spirits were as high as his own, and they talked and laughed until midnight as gaily as were Gates's army marching south. But Hamilton was a philosopher; nothing could be done before the morrow; he might as well be happy and forget. He had met many clever and accomplished American women by this, and Lady Kitty Alexander and Kitty and Susan Livingston were brilliant. He had also met Angelica Church, or Mrs. Carter, as she was called, one of the cleverest and most high-spirited women of her time. It had crossed his mind that had she been free, he might have made a bold dash for so fascinating a creature, but it seemed to him to-night that on the whole he preferred her sister. "Betsey" Schuyler had been given every advantage of education, accomplishment, and constant intercourse with the best society in the land. She had skill and tact in the management of guests, and without being by any means a woman of brilliant parts, understood the questions of the day; her brain was informed with shrewd commonsense. Hamilton concluded that she was quite clever enough, and was delighted with her beauty, her charm of manner, and style. Her little figure was graceful and distinguished, her complexion the honey and claret that artists extol, and she had a pair of big black eyes which were alternately roguish, modest, tender, sympathetic; there were times when they were very lively, and even suggested a temper. She was bright without attempting to be witty, but that she was deeply appreciative of wit Hamilton had soothing cause to know. And he had learned from the admiring

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Troup that she was as intrepid as she was wholly and daintily feminine. Altogether, Hamilton's fate was sealed when he bent over her hand that night, although he was far from suspecting it, so heavily did duty press the moment he was alone in his rooms.

On the following morning he asked for an interview with General Schuyler and several other military men whom he knew to be friendly to Washington, and they confirmed the advice of Troup. In the afternoon he wrote to Gates a letter that was peremptory, although dignified and circumspect, demanding the addition of a superior brigade. He expressed his indignation in no measured terms, and in more guarded phrases his opinion of the flimsiness of the victorious General's arguments. Gates sent the troops at once, and despatched a volume of explanation to Washington.

Hamilton set out immediately for New Windsor, Troup bearing him company the greater part of the way, for he was feeling very ill. But he forgot his ailments when he arrived. To his fury he discovered that not a regiment had gone south. Two of the brigades, which had received no pay for eight months, had mutinied, and he was obliged to ask Governor Clinton to borrow $5000, with which to pay them off. He had the satisfaction of despatching them, wrote a peremptory letter to Putnam, who had other plans brewing, another to Gates, asking for further reinforcements, then went to bed in Governor Clinton's house with fever and rheumatism. But he wrote to Washington, apprising him of a scheme among the officers of the northern department to recover the city of New York, and denouncing Putnam in the most emphatic terms. Two days later he recovered sufficiently to proceed to Fishkill, where he wrested troops from Putnam, and as-

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certained that heavy British reinforcements had gone from that neighbourhood to Howe. He wrote at once to Washington, advising him of his peril, and endeavoured to push on; but his delicate frame would stand no more, and on the 15th he went to bed in Mr. Kennedy's house in Peekskill, with so violent an attack of rheumatism that to his bitter disgust he was obliged to resign himself to weeks of inactivity. But he had the satisfaction to receive a letter from Washington approving all that he had done. And in truth he had saved the situation, and Washington never forgot it.

III.

HAMILTON rejoined the army at Valley Forge and soon recovered his health and spirits. It was well that the spirits revived, for no one else during that terrible winter could lay claim to any. The Headquarters were in a small valley, shut in by high hills white with snow and black with trees that looked like iron. The troops were starving and freezing and dying a mile away, muttering and cursing, but believing in Washington. On a hill beyond the pass Lafayette was comfortable in quarters of his own, but bored and fearing the worst. Laurens chafed at the inaction; he would have had a battle a day. As the winter wore on, the family succumbed to the depressing influence of unrelieved monotony and dread of the future, and only Hamilton knew to what depths of anxiety Washington could descend. But despair had no part in Hamilton's creed. He had perfect faith in the future, and announced it persistently. He assumed the mission of keeping the

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family in good cheer, and they gave him little time for his studies. As for Washington, even when Hamilton was not at his desk, he made every excuse to demand his presence in the private office; and Hamilton in his prayers humorously thanked his Almighty for the gift of a cheerful disposition. It may be imagined what a relief it was when he and Laurens, Meade, or Tilghman raced each other up the icy gorge to Lafayette's, where they were often jollier the night through than even a cheerful disposition would warrant. Hamilton, although he had not much of a voice, learned one camp-song, "The Drum," and this he sang with such rollicking abandon that it fetched an explosive sigh of relief from the gloomiest breast.

There were other duties from which Hamilton fled to the house on the hill for solace. Valley Forge harboured a heterogeneous collection of foreigners, whose enthusiasm had impelled them to offer swords and influence to the American cause: Steuben, Du Portail, De Noailles, Custine, Fleury, Du Plessis, the three brothers Armand, Ternant, Pulaski, and Kosciusko. They had a thousand wants, a thousand grievances, and as Washington would not be bothered by them, their daily recourse was Hamilton, whom they adored. To him they could lament in voluble French; he knew the exact consolation to administer to each, and when it was advisable he laid their afflictions before Washington or the Congress. They bored him not a little, but he sympathised with them in their Cimmerian exile, and it was necessary to keep them in the country for the sake of the moral effect. But he congratulated himself on his capacity for work.

"I used to wish that a hurricane would come and blow Cruger's store to Hell," he said one day to Laurens,

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"but I cannot be sufficiently thankful for that experience now. It made me as methodical as a machine, gave my brain a system without which I never could cope with this mass of work. I have this past week dried the tears of seven Frenchmen, persuaded Steuben that he is not Europe, nor yet General Washington, and without too much offending him, written a voluminous letter to Gates calculated to make him feel what a contemptible and traitorous ass he is, yet giving him no chance to run, blubbering, with it to the Congress, and official letters *ad nauseum*. I wish to God I were out of it all, and about to ride into battle at the head of a company of my own."

"And how many widows have you consoled?" asked Laurens. He was huddled in his cot, trying to keep warm.

"None," said Hamilton, with some gloom. "I haven't spoken to a woman for three weeks."

It was a standing joke at Headquarters that Washington always sent Hamilton to console the widows. This he did with such sympathy and tact, such address and energy, that his friends had occasionally been forced to extricate him from complications. But it was an accomplishment in which he excelled as long as he lived.

"The Chief will never let you go," pursued Laurens. "And as there is no one to take your place, you really should not wish it. Washington may be the army, but you are Washington's brain, and of quite as much importance. You should never forget—"

"Come out and coast. That will warm your blood," interrupted Hamilton. His own sense of duty was not to be surpassed, but he had rebellious moods, when preaching suggested fisticuffs.

Outside they met a messenger from Lafayette, begging

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them to repair to his quarters at once. There they found him entertaining a party of charming women from a neighbouring estate; and a half-hour later the dignity and fashion of Washington's family might have been seen coasting down a steep hill with three Philadelphian exiles, who were as accomplished in many ways as they were satisfying to look upon.

It was one of those days when a swift freeze has come with a rainstorm. Hamilton had stood at the window of the office for an hour, early in the day, biting the end of his quill, and watching the water change to ice as it struck the naked trees, casing every branch until, when the sun came out, the valley was surrounded by a diamond forest, the most radiant and dazzling of winter sights. The sun was still out, its light flashed back from a million facets, the ground was hard and white, the keen cold air awoke the blood, and the three young men forgot their grumblings, and blessed the sex which has alleviated man's burdens so oft and well.

IV.

In June the military ardours of this distinguished young trio were gratified to the point of temporary exhaustion. The British evacuated Philadelphia on the 18th, and proceeded up the Delaware in New Jersey. Captain Allan McLane had, as early as May 25th, reported to Washington the enemy's intention to change their quarters for New York, and Washington's desire was to crush them by a decisive blow. At a council of war, however, it was decided merely to hang upon the skirts of the retreating

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army and avoid an engagement. Lee was aggressive, almost insulting, in counselling inaction. Washington, much embarrassed, but hesitating to ignore the decisions of the council, followed the enemy by a circuitous route, until he reached the neighbourhood of Princeton. The British were in and about Allentown. Washington called another council of war, and urged the propriety of forcing an engagement before the enemy could reach the Heights of Monmouth. Again Lee overruled, being sustained by the less competent generals, who were in the majority. As soon as the council broke up, Hamilton sought out General Greene and led him aside. Greene was white and dejected, but Hamilton's face was hot, and his eyes were flashing.

"I believe that Lee is in the pay of the British or the Conway Cabal," he exclaimed. "I've always believed him ready at any minute to turn traitor. It's a pity he wasn't left to rot in prison. Washington must fight. His honour is at stake. If he lets the British walk off while we sit and whistle, his influence with the army will be gone, Europe will have no more of him, the Conway Cabal will have the excuse it's been watching at keyholes for, and Gates will be Commander-in-chief to-morrow. Will you come with me and persuade him to fight?"

"Yes," said Greene. "And I believe he will. You are like a sudden cold wind on an August day. Come on."

They walked rapidly toward Washington's tent. He was sitting on his campstool, but rose as they approached.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I anticipate the object of your visit. You wish me to fight."

"Yes!" exclaimed Hamilton. "As much as you wish it yourself. Why should you regard the councils of the traitorous and the timorous, who, for aught you know,

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may be in the pay of the Cabal? If the British retreat unmolested, the American army is disgraced. If Congress undertake to manage it, the whole cause will be lost, and the British will be stronger far than when we took up arms—"

"Enough," said Washington. "We fight."

He ordered a detachment of one thousand men, under General Wayne, to join the troops nearest the enemy. Lafayette was given the command of all the advance troops—Lee sulkily retiring in his favour—which amounted to about four thousand. Hamilton was ordered to accompany him and reconnoitre, carry messages between the divisions, and keep Washington informed of the movements of the enemy. There was but a chance that he would be able to fight, but the part assigned to him was not the least dangerous and important at Washington's disposal. The Chief moved forward with the main body of the army to Cranbury.

Clinton had no desire to fight, being encumbered with a train of baggage-waggons and bat-horses, which with his troops made a line on the highroad twelve miles long. It being evident that the Americans intended to give battle, he encamped in a strong position near Monmouth Court-house, protected on nearly all sides by woods and marshes. His line extended on the right about a mile and a half beyond the Court-house, and on the left, along the road toward Allentown, for about three miles.

This disposition compelled Washington to increase the advance corps, and he ordered Lee to join Lafayette with two brigades. As senior officer, Lee assumed command of the whole division, under orders to make the first attack. Both Lafayette and Hamilton were annoyed and apprehensive at this arrangement. "Washington is the

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shrewdest of men in his estimates until it is a matter of personal menace," said Hamilton, "and then he is as trusting as a country wench with a plausible villain. I thought we had delivered him from this scoundrel, and now he has deliberately placed his fortunes in his hands again. Mark you, Lee will serve us some trick before the battle is over."

Hamilton had been galloping back and forth night and day between Lafayette's division and Headquarters, wherever they happened to be, and reconnoitring constantly. The weather was intensely hot, the soil so sandy that his horse often floundered. He had not had a full night's sleep since Washington announced his decision to give battle, and he would have been worn out, had he not been too absorbed and anxious to retain any consciousness of his body. Early on the morning of the 28th, a forward movement being observed on the part of the enemy, Washington immediately put the army in motion and sent word to Lee to press forward and attack.

Lee looked uglier and dirtier than usual, and the very seat of his breeches scowled as he rode forward leisurely. In a few moments he halted, word having been brought him that the main body of the British was advancing.

"If we could but court-martial him on the spot," groaned Lafayette, whose delicate boyish face was crumpled with anxiety.

"He meditates treason!" exclaimed Hamilton. "It is writ all over him."

Having ascertained that the rumour was false, Lee consented to move on again, and the division entered the forest, their advance covered from the British on the plains beyond. For a time Lee manœuvred so cleverly

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that Hamilton and Lafayette permitted themselves to hope. Under cover of the forest he formed a portion of his line for action, and with Wayne, Hamilton, and others, rode forward to reconnoitre. Concluding that the column of the British deploying on the right was only a covering party of two thousand, he manœuvred to cut them off from the main army. Wayne was detached with seven hundred men to attack the covering party in the rear. Lee, with a stronger force, was to gain its front by a road to the left. Small detachments were concealed in the woods. At nine o'clock, the Queen's dragoons being observed upon an eminence near the wood, Lee ordered his light-horse to decoy them to the point where Wayne was posted. The dragoons appeared to fall into the trap, but upon being attacked from the wood, galloped off toward the main column. Wayne started in pursuit; his artillery was raking them, and he had ordered a charge at the point of the bayonet, when, to his amazement, he received an order from Lee to make but a feint of attack and pursuit. He had no choice but to obey, brilliant as might be the victory wrested from him. Lee, meanwhile, dawdled about, although his troops were on one foot with impatience.

Suddenly Sir Henry Clinton, learning that the Americans were marching in force on both his flanks, with the design of capturing his baggage, changed the front of his army by facing about in order to attack Wayne with such deadly fire that the enemy on his flanks would be obliged to fly to the succour of that small detachment. Lafayette immediately saw the opportunity for victory in the rear of the enemy, and rode up to Lee asking permission to make the attempt.

Lee swung his loose head about and scowled at the

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ardent young Frenchman. "Sir," he replied witheringly, "you do not know British soldiers. We cannot stand against them. We certainly shall be driven back at first. We must be cautious."

"It may be so, General," replied Lafayette, who would have given much to see that head rolling on the sands; "but British soldiers have been beaten, and they may be again. At any rate, I am disposed to make the trial."

Lee shrugged his shoulders, but as Lafayette sat immovable, his clear hazel eyes interrogating and astonished, he reluctantly gave the Marquis the order to wheel his column to the right and attack the enemy's left. He simultaneously weakened Wayne's detachment and went off to reconnoitre. He afterward claimed that he saw what looked to be the approach of the entire army, and he ordered his right to fall back. The brigades of Scott and Maxwell on the left were already moving forward and approaching the right of the Royal forces, when they received an order from Lee to reënter the wood. At the same time an order was sent to Lafayette to fall back to the Court-house. With a face as flaming as his unpowdered head, he obeyed. Upon reaching the Court-house he learned that a general retreat had begun on the right, under the immediate command of Lee. He had no choice but to follow.

Hamilton, hardly crediting that his worst fears were realised in this unwarranted retreat, galloped over to Lee and urged that possession be taken of a neighbouring hill that commanded the plain on which the enemy were advancing. But Lee protested violently that the Americans had not a chance against that solid phalanx, and Hamilton, now convinced that he meditated the dis-

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grace of the American arms, galloped with all speed in search of Washington.

The retreat, by this, was a panic. The troops fled like an army of terrified rabbits, with that reversion to the simplicity of their dumb ancestors which induces the suspicion that all the manly virtues are artificial. In times of panic man seems to exchange his soul for a tail. These wretches trampled each other into the shifting sand, and crowded many more into the morass. The heat was terrific. They ran with their tongues hanging out, and many dropped dead.

Washington heard of the retreat before Hamilton found him. He was pushing on to Lee's relief when a countryman brought him word of the disgraceful rout. Washington refused to credit the report and spurred forward. Halfway between the meeting-house and the morass he met the head of the first retreating column. He commanded it to halt at once, before the panic be communicated to the main army; then made for Lee. Lee saw him coming and braced himself for the shock. But it was a greater man than Lee who could stand the shock of Washington's temper. He was fearfully roused. The noble gravity of his face had disappeared. It was convulsed with rage.

"Sir," he thundered, "I desire to know what is the reason of this? Whence arises this confusion and disorder?"

"Sir—" stammered Lee, "sir—" He braced himself, and added impudently: "I thought it best not to beard the enemy in such a situation. It was contrary to my opinion—"

"*Your* opinion!" And then the Chief undammed a torrent of profanity Washingtonian in its grandeur.

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He wheeled and galloped to the rallying of the troops. At this moment Hamilton rode up. He had ridden through the engagement without a hat. It seemed to him that he could hear the bubbling of his brain, that the very air blazed, and that the end of all things had come. That day of Monmouth ever remained in his memory as the most awful and hopeless of his life. An ordinary defeat was nothing. But the American arms branded with cowardice, Washington ignobly deposed, inefficient commanders floundering for a few months before the Americans were become the laughing-stock of Europe,—the whole vision was so hideous, and the day so hopeless in the light of those cowardly hordes, that he galloped through the rain of British bullets, praying for death; he had lost all sense of separate existence from the shattered American cause. He did not perceive that Washington had reached the column, and resolved to make one more appeal to Lee, he rode up to that withered culprit and exclaimed passionately:—

"I will stay with you, my dear General, and die with you! Let us all die here, rather than retreat!"

Lee made no reply. His brain felt as if a hot blast had swept it.

"At least send a detachment to the succour of the artillery," said Hamilton, with quick suspicion. And Lee ordered Colonel Livingston to advance.

At the same moment someone told Hamilton that Washington was in the rear, rallying the troops. He spurred his horse and found that the General had rallied the regiments of Ramsay and Stewart, after a rebuke under which they still trembled, and was ordering Oswald to hasten his cannon to the eminence which his aide had suggested to Lee. Hamilton himself was in time to

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intercept two retreating brigades. He succeeded in rallying them, formed them along a fence at hand, and ordered them to charge at the point of the bayonet. He placed himself at their head, and they made a brilliant dash upon the enemy. But his part was soon over. His horse was shot under him, and as he struck the ground he was overcome by the shock and the heat, and immediately carried from the field. But the retreat was suspended, order restored, and although the battle raged all day, the British gained no advantage. The troops were so demoralised by the torrid heat that at sunset both Commanders were obliged to cease hostilities; and Washington, who had been in the saddle since daybreak, threw himself under a tree to sleep, confident of a victory on the morrow.

"I had a feeling as if my very soul were exploding," said Hamilton to Laurens, as they bathed their heads in a stream in the woods, with the bodies of dead and living huddled on every side of them. "I had a hideous vision of Washington and the rest of us in a huge battle picture, in which a redcoat stood on every squirming variety of continental uniform, while a screeching eagle flew off with the Declaration of Independence. But after all, there is something magnificent in so absolutely identifying yourself with a cause that you go down to its depths of agony and fly to its heights of exaltation. I was mad to die when the day—and with it the whole Cause—seemed lost. Patriotism surely is the master passion. Nothing else can annihilate the ego."

Laurens, who had performed prodigies of valour, sighed heavily. "I felt as you did while the engagement lasted," he replied. "But I went into the battle with exultation,

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for death this time seemed inevitable. And the only result is a headache. What humiliation!"

"You are morbid, my dear," said Hamilton, tenderly. "You cannot persuade me that at the age of twenty-five naught remains but death—no matter what mistakes one may have made. There is always the public career—for which you are eminently fitted. I would begin life over again twenty times if necessary."

"Yes, because you happen to be a man of genius. I am merely a man of parts. There are many such. Not only is my life ruined, but every day I despair anew of ever attaining that high ideal of character I have set for myself. I want nothing short of perfection," he said passionately. "Could I attain that, I should be content to live, no matter how wretched. But I fall daily. My passions control me, my hatreds, my impulses of the moment. When a man's very soul aches for a purity which it is in man to attain if he will, and when he is daily reminded that he is but a whimperer at the feet of the statue, the world is no place for him."

"Laurens," said Hamilton, warmly, "you refine on the refinements of sensibility. You have brooded until you no longer are normal and capable of logic. Compare your life with that of most men, and hope. You are but twenty-five, and you have won a deathless glory, by a valour and brilliancy on these battlefields that no one else has approached. Your brain and accomplishments are such that the country looks to you as one of its future guides. Your character is that of a Bayard. It is your passions alone, my dear, which save you from being a prig. Passion is the furnace that makes greatness possible. If, when the mental energies are resting, it darts out tongues of flame that strike in the wrong place, I do not

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believe that the Almighty, who made us, counts them as sins. They are natural outlets, and we should burst without them. If one of those tongues of flame was the cause of your undoing, God knows you have paid in kind. As a rule no one is the worse, while most are better. A certain degree of perfection we can attain, but absolute perfection—go into a wilderness like Mohammed and fast. There is no other way, and even then you merely would have visions; you would not be yourself."

Laurens laughed. "It is not easy to be morbid when you are by. Acquit me for the rest of the night. And it is time we slept. There will be hot work to-morrow. How grandly the Chief rallied! There is a man!"

"He was in a blazing temper," remarked Hamilton. "Lee and Ramsay and Stewart were like to have died of fright. I wish to God he'd strung the first to a gibbet!"

They sought out Washington and lay down beside him. The American army slept as though its soul had withdrawn to another realm where repose is undisturbed. Not so the British army. Sir Henry Clinton did not share Washington's serene confidence in the morrow. He withdrew his weary army in the night, and was miles away when the dawn broke.

Once Washington awoke, raised himself on his elbow, and listened intently. But he could hear nothing but the deep breathing of his weary army. The stars were brilliant. He glanced about his immediate vicinity with a flicker of amusement and pleasure in his eyes. The young men of his household were crowded close about him; he had nearly planted his elbow on Hamilton's profile. Laurens, Tilghman, Meade, even Lafayette, were there, and they barely had left him room to turn over. He knew that these worshipping young enthusiasts were all ready and

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eager to die for him, and that in spite of his rigid formality they were quite aware of his weak spot, and did not hesitate to manifest their affection. For a moment the loneliest man on earth felt as warmly companioned as if he were raising a family of rollicking boys; then he gently lifted Hamilton out of the way, and slept again. He was bitterly disappointed next morning; but to pursue the enemy in that frightful heat, over a sandy country without water, and with his men but half refreshed, was out of the question.

The rest of the year was uneventful, except for the court-martialling of Lee and his duel with Laurens, who challenged him for his defamation of Washington. Then came the eventful winter of 1779-80, when the army went into quarters at Morristown, Washington and his military family taking possession of a large house belonging to the Widow Ford.

V.

"ALEXANDER!" cried a musical but imperious voice.

Hamilton was walking in the depths of the wood, thinking out his financial policy for the immediate relief of the country. He started and faced about. Kitty Livingston sat on her horse, a charming picture in the icy brilliance of the wood. He ran toward her, ripped off her glove, kissed her hand, replaced the glove, then drew back and saluted.

"You are a saucy boy," said Miss Livingston, "and I've a mind to box your ears. I've brought you up very badly; but upon my word, if you were a few years older, I believe I'd marry you and keep you in order, something

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no other woman will ever be able to do. But I've a piece of news for you—my dear little brother. Betsey Schuyler is here."

Alexander, much to his annoyance, blushed vividly. "And how can you know that I have ever even seen Miss Schuyler?" he asked, rather sulkily.

"*She* told me all about it, my dear. And I inferred from the young lady's manner that she lived but to renew the experience. She is down at Surgeon-General Cochraine's. Mrs. Cochraine is her aunt. Seriously, I want you to be a good little beau, and keep her here as long as possible. She is a great addition to our society; for she is not only one of the belles of the country, accomplished and experienced, but she has an amazing fine character, and I am anxious to know her better. You are still too young to marry, *mon enfant,* but you are so precocious and Miss Schuyler is so charming—if you will marry at your absurd age, you could not do better; for you'll get fine parents as well as a wife, and I've never known a youth more in need of an entire family."

Hamilton laughed. "If I accumulate any more parents," he said, "I shall share the fate of the cat. This morning Colonel Harrison—one of my fathers—almost undressed me to see if my flannels were thick enough, Mrs. Washington gave me a fearful scolding because I went out without a muffler, and even the General is always darting edged glances at the soles of my boots. Yesterday, Laurens, who is two-thirds English, tried to force an umbrella into my hand, but at that I rebelled. If I marry, it will be for the pleasure of taking care of someone else."

He escorted Miss Livingston out to the highroad, and returned to Headquarters, his imagination dancing. He had by no means forgotten Miss Schuyler. That merry

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roguish high-bred face had shone above many dark horizons, illuminated many bitter winter nights at Valley Forge. He was excited at the prospect of seeing her again, and hastened to arrange a dinner, to which she must be bidden. The young men did as they chose about entertaining, sure of Washington's approval.

"Ah, I know Miss Schuyler well," exclaimed Tilghman, when Hamilton remarked that they should immediately show some attention to the daughter of so illustrious a man as General Schuyler. "I've fetched and carried for her—in fact I once had the honour to be despatched by her mamma to buy her a pair of stays. I fell at her little feet immediately. She has the most lively dark good-natured eyes I ever saw—Good God, Hamilton, are you going to run me through?"

Hamilton for the moment was so convulsed with jealous rage that his very fingers curved, and he controlled them from his friend's throat with an effort. Tilghman's words brought him to his senses, and he laughed heartily. "I was as jealous as Othello, if you'll have the truth, and just why, I vow I don't know, for I met this young lady only once, and that a year ago. I was much attracted, but it's not possible I'm in love with her."

"It's love, my dear boy," said Tilghman, gravely. "Go and ask Steuben if I am not right. Laurens and I will arrange the dinner. You attend to your case immediately."

Hamilton, much concerned, repaired to the house of Baron Steuben. This old courtier and rake was physician in ordinary to all the young men in their numerous cardiacal complications. Hamilton found him in his little study, smoking a huge meerschaum. His weather-beaten face grinned with delight at the appearance of his favourite, but he shook his head solemnly at the revelation.

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"I fear this time you are shot, my dear little Hamilton," he said, with much concern. "Have you told me all?"

"All that I can think of." Hamilton was sitting forward on the edge of the chair in considerable dejection. He had not expected this intrication, had hoped the Baron would puff it away.

"Has she a neat waist?"

Hamilton admitted, with some surprise, that her waist was exceptional.

"And her eyes?—I have heard of them—benevolent, yet sparkling;—and a daughter of the Schuylers. Hamilton, believe me, there are worse things than love."

"But I have affairs of the utmost moment on hand at present. I'm revolving a whole financial system, and the correspondence grows heavier every day. I've no time for love."

"My boy," said the former aide to the great Frederick, with emphasis, "when you can work in the sun, why cling to the cold corner of a public hearth? Your brain will spin the faster for the fire underneath. You will write great words and be happy besides. Think of that. What a combination! Mein Gott! You will be terribly in love, my son, but your balance is so extraordinary that your brain will work on just the same. Otherwise I would not dare give such counsel, for without you General Washington would give up, and your poor old Steuben would not have money for tobacco. Give me just half-sovereign," he added coaxingly.

Hamilton examined the big tobacco pouch and found it two-thirds full. "Not a penny," he said gaily. "The day after to-morrow I will buy you some myself, but I know where that last sovereign went to."

Hamilton took care of the old spendthrift's money, and

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not only then but as long as he lived. "The Secretary of the Treasury is my banker," said Steuben, years after. "My Hamilton takes care of my money when he cannot take care of his own."

Hamilton retired in some perturbation, and the result of much thinking was that he spent an unconscionable time over his toilet on the evening of the dinner. In his nervousness he tore one of his lace ruffles. Laurens attempted to mend it, and the rent waxed. Hamilton was forced to knock at Mrs. Washington's door and ask her to repair the injury. She was already dressed, in a black lutestring, her hair flat and natural. She looked approvingly at Hamilton, who, not excepting Laurens, was always the most faultlessly dressed member of the family. To-night he wore dark green velvet, fitting closely and exquisitely cut, white silk stockings, and a profusion of delicate lace. His hair was worn in a queue and powdered. It was not till some years later that he conformed to the prevailing fashion and wore a wig.

Mrs. Washington mended the lace, retied the bow of his queue, kissed him and told him to forget the cares of war and correspondence, and enjoy himself. Hamilton retired, much comforted.

It was an imposing family which, a half-hour later, awaited the guests in the drawing-room. Washington was in black velvet and silk stockings, his best white wig spreading in two symmetrical wings. It was a cold grave figure always, and threw an air of solemnity over every scene it loomed upon, which only Hamilton's lively wit could dispel. Laurens wore plum-coloured velvet and much lace, a magnificent court costume. His own figure was no less majestic than Washington's, but his brown eyes and full mouth were almost invariably smiling, despite

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the canker. He wore a very close wig. Tilghman was in blue, the other men in more sober dress. Lafayette some time since had departed for France, Hamilton having suggested that the introduction of a French military force of six or seven thousand troops would have a powerful effect upon the American army and people.

Lady Sterling arrived with Lady Kitty—the bride of Colonel William Duer since July—her undistinguished homeliness enhancing the smart appearance of her daughter, who was one of the beauties of the time. Lady Kitty had a long oval face, correct haughty little features, and a general air of extreme high breeding. Her powdered hair was in a tower, and she had the tiniest waist and stood upon the highest heels of all the belles. She wore white satin over an immense hoop, a flounce of Spanish lace and a rope of pearls. Kitty Livingston wore yellow which outshone the light of the candles. Susan Boudinot and the other girls were dressed more simply. Mr. Boudinot's eyes were as keen and as kind as ever, his nose seemed longer, and the flesh was accumulating beneath his chin.

The Cochraines and Miss Elizabeth Schuyler were the last to arrive. The northern belle's wardrobe had been an object of much concern to the young ladies now cut off from New York shops, and lamenting the demoralised condition of those in Philadelphia. In Albany all things were still possible. Miss Schuyler wore a pink brocade of the richest and most delicate quality, and a bertha of Brussels lace. The pointed bodice and large paniers made her waist look almost as small as Kitty Duer's, and her feet were the tiniest in the world. She turned them in and walked with a slight shuffle. Hamilton had never seen a motion so adorable. Her hair was rolled out from

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her face on both sides as well as above, and so thickly powdered that her eyes looked as black as General Washington's coat, while her cheeks and lips were like red wine on pale amber. She blushed as Hamilton bowed before her and offered his arm, and then she felt his heart thump. As for Hamilton, he gave himself up for lost the moment she entered the room, and with the admission, his feelings concentrated with their usual fiery impetuosity. As it was too soon for an outlet, they rushed to his eyes and camped there, to Miss Schuyler's combined discomfort and delight.

For once Hamilton was content to listen, and Miss Schuyler was not loath to entertain this handsome young aide, of whom all the world was talking, and who had haunted her dreams for a year. She had read Milton, Shenstone, and Dodsworth, "The Search after Happiness," by Hannah More, the works of Madame de Genlis, the "Essay on Man," and Shakespeare's lighter plays. Her learning was not oppressive, merely sufficient to give distinction to her mind, and Hamilton was enchanted once more; but he found her most interesting when relating personal anecdotes of encounters with savage warriors in that dark northern land where she had been born and bred, of hideous massacres of which her neighbours had been the victims, of adventurous journeys she had taken with her father, of painted chieftains they had been forced to entertain. She talked with great spirit and no waste of words, and it was evident that she was both sensible and heroic. Hamilton ate little and forgot that he was in a company of twenty people. He was recalled by an abraded shin.

He turned with a jump and encountered Meade's

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agonised face thrust across Susan Livingston, who sat between them.

"For God's sake, Hamilton, come forth and talk," said Meade, in a hoarse whisper. "There hasn't been a word said above a mutter for three-quarters of an hour. Tilghman gave out long ago. Unless you come to the rescue we'll all be moaning in each other's arms in three minutes."

Hamilton glanced about the table. Washington, looking like himself on a monument, was making not a pretence to entertain poor Lady Sterling, who was almost sniffling. Lord Sterling, having gratified, an hour since, Mrs. Washington's polite interest in his health, was stifling yawn after yawn, and his chubby little visage was oblong and crimson. Tilghman, looking guilty and uncomfortable, —it was his duty to relieve Hamilton at the table,— was flirting with Miss Boudinot. Lady Kitty and Baron Steuben always managed to entertain each other. Laurens and Kitty Livingston were sitting back and staring at each other as they had stared many times before. The others were gazing at their plates or at Hamilton. It was, indeed, a Headquarters dinner at the worst.

It has been remarked that Hamilton had a strong sense of duty. He felt himself unable, even with the most charming girl on the continent beside him, to resist the appeal of all those miserable eyes, and launched forth at once upon the possibilities of Lafayette returning with an army. Everybody responded, and he had many subjects of common interest to discourse brilliantly upon until the long meal finished. Even Washington gave him a grateful glance, and the others reattacked their excellent food with a lost relish, now that the awful silence and sense of personal failure were dispelled by

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their "bright particular star," as the letters of the day from Morristown and the vicinity cleped our hero. But with Miss Schuyler he had no further word that night, and he retired with the conviction that there were times when there was no satisfaction whatever in doing one's duty.

VI.

But a few nights later there was a subscription ball in the commissary storehouse, and Hamilton danced with Miss Schuyler no less than ten times, to the merciless amusement of the family. The ball, the first of any size since the war began, was a fine affair, and had been organised by Tilghman, Meade, and several of the Frenchmen; they were determined upon one gay season, at least. The walls were covered with flags and holly; the women wore their most gorgeous brocades; feathers and jewels were on becoming white wigs or on the towers of powdered hair. All the foreigners were in full regimentals, Steuben, in particular, being half covered with gold lace and orders; the music and supper were admirable. Even Washington looked less careworn than usual, and as he stood apart with Lord Sterling, General Knox, and General Greene, he shed no perceptible chill. Miss Schuyler wore white, with a twist of black velvet in her powdered hair and another about her throat, and would have been the belle of the party had Hamilton permitted other attentions. But she gave him all the dances he demanded, and although her bright manner did not lapse toward sentiment for a moment, he went

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home so elated that he sat scribbling poetry until Laurens pelted him with pillows and extinguished the candle.

The next day there was a sleighing party to Lord Sterling's, and he drove Miss Schuyler, her aunt, and the wife of General Knox through the white and crystal and blue of a magnificent winter day. Mrs. Cochraine made no secret of her pride in her niece's capture of Washington's celebrated favourite, and assured him of a hearty welcome at her house if he felt disposed to call. He promptly established the habit of calling every evening.

But although he was seriously and passionately in love, and quite sure that Miss Schuyler loved him in return, he hesitated for the first time in his life before precipitating a desired consummation. That he had no money did not worry him in the least, for he knew himself capable of earning any amount, and that the Republic, when free, would bristle with opportunities for young men of parts. But he was in honour bound to tell her of the irregularity of his birth. And in what manner would she regard a possible husband with whose children she never could discuss their father's parents? She was twenty-two, a small woman-of-the-world, not a romantic young miss incapable of reason. And the Schuylers? The proudest family in America! Would they take him on what he had made of himself, on the promise of his future, or would their family pride prove stronger than their commonsense? He had moments of frantic doubt and depression, but fortunately there was no time for protracted periods of lover's misery. Washington demanded him constantly for consultation upon the best possible method of putting animation into the Congress and extracting money for the wretched troops. He frequently accompanied the General, as at Valley Forge, in his visits to the encampment on

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the mountain, where the emaciated tattered wretches were hutting with all possible speed against the severity of another winter. The snow was already on the ground, and every prospect of a repetition of the horrors of Valley Forge. The mere sight of Washington put heart into them, and Hamilton's lively sallies rarely failed to elicit a smile in return.

It so happened that for a fortnight the correspondence with Congress, the States, the Generals, and the British, in regard to the exchange of prisoners, was so heavy, the consultations with Washington so frequent, that Hamilton saw nothing of Miss Schuyler, and had little time for the indulgence of pangs. When he emerged, however, his mind was the freer to seek a solution of the problem which had tormented him, and he quickly found it. He determined to write the truth to Miss Schuyler, and so save the embarrassment he had dreaded for both. To think was to act. He related the facts of his birth and of his ancestry in the briefest possible manner, adding a description of his mother which would leave no question of the place she held in his esteem. He then stated, with the emphasis of which he was master, that he distractedly awaited his dismissal, or Miss Schuyler's permission to declare what he had so awkwardly concealed.

He sent the letter by an orderly, and attacked his correspondence with a desire to put gunpowder on his quill. But Miss Schuyler was a tender-hearted creature and had no intention that he should suffer. She scrawled him a hasty summons to come to her at once, and bade the orderly ride as for his life. Hamilton, hearing a horse coming up the turnpike at runaway pace, glanced out of the window to see what neck was in danger, then flung his quill to the floor and bolted. He was out of the house

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before the orderly had dismounted, and secured possession of the note. When he had returned to his office, which was in a log extension at the back of the building, he locked the door and read what he could of Miss Schuyler's illegible chirography. That it was a command to wait upon her at once he managed to decipher, but no more at the moment; and feeling as if the heavens had opened, he despatched a hasty note, telling her that he could not leave his work before night, when he would hasten with the pent-up assurances of a love which had been his torment and delight for many weeks. And then he answered a summons to Washington's office, and discussed a letter to the Congress as if there were no such person in the world as Elizabeth Schuyler, as indeed for the hour there was not, nor for the rest of the afternoon.

But at eight o'clock he presented himself at the Cochraine quarters, and Miss Schuyler was alone in the drawing-room. It was some time before they arrived at the question which had weighed so heavily on Hamilton's mind. When, however, they came down to conversation, Miss Schuyler remarked: —

"I am sure that it will make no difference with my dear father, who is the most just and sensible of men. I had never thought of your parentage at all. I should have said you had leapt down from the abode of the gods, for you are much too remarkable to have been merely born. But if he should object — why, we'll run away."

Her eyes danced at the prospect, and Hamilton, who had vowed that nothing should induce him to enter a family where he was not welcome, was by now so hopelessly in love that he was ready to order the chaise and

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four at once. He remained until Mrs. Cochraine sent him home, then walked up the hill toward Headquarters, keeping to the road by instinct, for he was deep in a reverie on the happiness of the past hours. His dreams were cruelly shattered by the pressure of a bayonet against his breast.

"What?" he demanded. "Oh, the countersign." He racked his memory. It had fled, terrified, from his brain under the rush of that evening's emotions.

"I can't remember it," he said haughtily; "but you know who I am. Let me pass." The sentry stood like a fate.

"This is ridiculous!" cried Hamilton, angrily, then the absurdity of the situation overcame him, and he laughed. Once more he searched his brain for the countersign, which he remembered having given to little Ford just after dinner. Mrs. Ford and her son retained two rooms in the house, and Hamilton frequently gave the youngster the word, that he might play in the village after dark. Suddenly he saw him approaching. He darted down the road, secured the password, and returned in triumph to the sentry.

"Sir," exclaimed the soldier, in dismay, "is this quite regular? Will you give me your word, sir, that it is all right?"

"I vow that no harm shall come to you," said Hamilton. "Shoulder your musket." And there the incident ended, so far as the soldier was concerned, but young Ford carried the story to Headquarters, and it was long before Hamilton heard the last of it.

There was no sleep in him that night. He went to his office and laboured for hours over a verse which should adequately express the love consuming him, and

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then he awoke Laurens and talked into that sympathetic ear until it was time to break the ice and freshen himself for work.

His work that day was of a vastly different character from the impassioned trifle of the night before. He obtained exemption from other duty, and ordered luncheon and dinner brought to his office. One of the most remarkable examples of Hamilton's mature genius at this age of twenty-three is his long and elaborate letter to Robert Morris on the financial condition of the country, written during the earliest period of his love for Elizabeth Schuyler. As passionate and impatient as he was tender, alive in every part of his nature to the joy of a real affection and to the prospect of a lasting happiness, he yet was able for twelve hours at a time to shut his impending bride in the remotest cupboard of his mind, nor heed her sighs. But there was an older love than Elizabeth Schuyler: a ragged poverty-stricken creature by this, cowering before dangers within and without, raving mad at times, imbecile at others, filling her shattered body with patent nostrums, yet throughout her long course of futilities and absurdities making a desperate attempt to shade the battered lamp of liberty from the fatal draught. Her name was the United States of America, and never was there a more satiric misnomer. If the States chose to obey the requisitions of the Congress, they obeyed them; but as a rule they did not. There was no power in the land to enforce obedience; and they hated each other. As the Congress had demonstrated its inefficiency to the most inactive in public affairs, the contempt of the States is hardly to be wondered at. It is not too much to say that troops were recruited by Washington's influence alone, and kept from mutiny by his immortal magnetism. The finances of the Revolution

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were in such a desperate condition that Sir Henry Clinton built his hopes of success—now he had discovered that no victory gave him a permanent advantage—upon the dissolution of the American army, possibly an internal war. With depreciated bills in circulation amounting to one hundred and sixty millions of dollars, a public debt of nearly forty millions in foreign and domestic loans, the Congress had, in March, ordered a new emission of bills; the result had been a season of crazy speculation and the expiring gasp of public credit. In addition to an unpaid army, assurances had been given to the French minister that not less than twenty-five thousand men should be ready for the next campaign; and how to force the States to recruit them, and how to pay them when in the field, was the present question between Headquarters and Congress.

From the time that Hamilton's mind had turned to finance, in his nineteenth year, he had devoted the greater part of his leisure to the study and thought of it. Books on the subject were few in those days; the science of political economy was unborn, so far as Hamilton was concerned, for Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations," published in 1776, had not made its way to America. He assimilated all the data there was to be found, then poured it into the crucible of his creative faculty, and gradually evolved the great scheme of finance which is the locomotive of the United States to-day. During many long winter evenings he had talked his ideas over with Washington, and it was with the Chief's full approval that he finally went to work on the letter embodying his scheme for the immediate relief of the country. It was addressed to Robert Morris, the Financier of the Revolution.

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The first part of the letter was an essay on inflated and depreciated currency, applied personally, the argument based on the three following points: There having been no money in the country, Congress had been unable to avoid the issuance of paper money. The only way to obtain and retire this immense amount of depreciated paper money was to obtain real money. Real money could be obtained in one way only,—by a foreign loan. He then elaborately disposed of the proposed insane methods of applying this projected loan which were agitating the Congress. But he was an architect and builder as well as an iconoclast, and having shown the futility of every financial idea ever conceived by Congress, he proceeded to the remedy. His scheme, then as ever, was a National Bank, to be called The Bank of the United States; the capital to be a foreign loan of two millions sterling.

This letter, even in its details, in the knowledge of human nature it betrays, and in its scheme to combine public and private capital that the wealthy men of the country should, in their own interests, be compelled to support the government, reads like an easy example in arithmetic to-day; but a hundred and twenty years ago it was so bold and advanced that Morris dared to adopt several of its suggestions in part only, and founded the bank of Pennsylvania on the greater plan, by way of experiment. No one but Hamilton could carry out his own theories.

Hamilton, who often had odd little attacks of modesty, signed the letter, James Montague; address, Morristown. He read it to Washington before posting.

The Chief, whose men were aching, sighed heavily.

"They will pick a few crumbs out of it," he said. "But they will not make a law of it in toto; the millennium

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is not yet come. But if it gives them one idea we should be thankful, it being a long and weary time since they have experienced that phenomenon. If it does not, I doubt if these men fight another battle. I wonder if posterity will ever realise the indifference of their three million ancestors to the war which gave them their independence—if we accomplish that end. I ask for soldiers and am treated much as if I had asked for my neighbour's wife. I ask for money to keep them from starving and freezing and am made to feel like an importunate beggar."

"I had a letter from Hugh Knox not so long since," said Hamilton, in his lightest tone; for Washington was on the verge of one of his attacks of infuriated depression, which were picturesque but wearing. "He undertakes to play the prophet, and he is an uncommon clever man, sir: he says that you were created for the express purpose of delivering America, to do it single-handed, if necessary, and that my proud destiny is to be your biographer. The first I indorse, so does every thinking man in the country. But for the second—alas! I am not equal to a post of such exalted honour."

Washington smiled. "No one knows better than your old Chief that your destiny is no such ha'penny affair as that. But at least you wouldn't make an ass of me. God knows what is in store for me at the hands of scribblers."

"You lend yourself fatally well to marble and stone, sir," said Hamilton, mischievously. "I fear your biographers will conceive themselves writing at the feet of a New World Sphinx, and that its frozen granite loneliness will petrify their image of you."

"I like the prospect! I am unhappily conscious of my power to chill an assemblage, but the cold formality of my manner is a safeguard, as you know. My nature is one of

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extremes; if I did not encase myself, I should be ramming every man's absurd opinions down his throat, and letting my cursed temper fly at each of the provocations which constantly beset me. I have not the happy gift of compromise; but I am not unhuman, and I like not the prospect of going down to posterity a wooden figurehead upon some emblematic battleship. Perhaps, my boy, you, who best know me, will be moved by charity to be my biographer, after all."

"I'll make it the business of my old age, sir; I pledge you my word, and no one loves you better nor can do you such justice as I. When my work in the National Family is done, then shall I retire with my literary love, an old and pleasant love; and what higher subject for my pen?"

He spoke in a tone of badinage, for he was bent on screwing up Washington's spirits, but he made his promise in good faith, nevertheless, and Washington looked at him with deep affection.

"My mind is certainly easier," he said, in a tone that was almost light. "Go now and post your letter, and give your evening to Miss Schuyler. Present my compliments to her."

"I became engaged to her last night, sir."

"Ah! had you forgotten to tell me?"

"No, sir; I have but just remembered it."

Washington laughed heartily. "Mind you never tell her that," he said. "Women love the lie that saves their pride, but never an unflattering truth. You have learned your lesson young,—to put a tempting face aside when duty demands every faculty; it is a lesson which takes most men longest to learn. I could tell you some amusing stories of rough and tumbles in my mind between the

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divine image of the hour and some affair of highest moment. But to a brain like yours all things are possible."

He rose, and took Hamilton's hand and shook it warmly.

"God bless you," he said. "Your future unrolls to my vision, brilliant and happy. I deeply wish that it may be so."

VII.

THE letter from General Schuyler, giving his consent to the engagement, has not been preserved; but some time after he had occasion to write Hamilton a business letter, in which the following passage occurs:—

> You cannot, my dear sir, be more happy at the connexion you have made with my family than I am. Until the child of a parent has made a judicious choice, his heart is in continual anxiety; but this anxiety was removed on the moment I discovered it was on you she had placed her affections. I am pleased with every instance of delicacy in those who are so dear to me; and I think I read your soul on the occasion you mention. I shall therefore only entreat you to consider me as one who wishes in every way to promote your happiness.

General Schuyler was ordered by Congress to Morristown to confer with Washington. He took a house, sent for his family, and remained until late in the summer. The closest friendship was formed between Schuyler and Hamilton, which, with common political interests and deepening sympathy, increased from year to year. The good fairies of Nevis who had attended Hamilton's birth never did better for him than when they gave him Elizabeth Schuyler for wife and Philip Schuyler for father and

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friend. And they had blasted the very roots of the chief impediment to success, for he triumphed steadily and without effort over what has poisoned the lives of many men; and triumphed in spite of the fact that the truth was vaguely known always, and kept in the quiver of his enemies.

As Hamilton was absent from Headquarters but seldom during General Schuyler's sojourn, the lovers met almost every evening, and occasionally Washington, who possessed certain sympathies based on long experience, would give Hamilton a morning free, and suggest a ride through the woods. Never were two people happier nor more inherently suited. Hamilton's instinct had guided him safely past more brilliant women to one who willingly would fold herself round his energetic individuality of many parts, fitting into every division and crevice. She was receptive, sympathetic, adaptive, with sufficient intelligence to appreciate the superlative brain of the man whom she never ceased to worship and to regard as a being of unmortal clay. A brilliant ambitious wife in the same house with Hamilton might have written a picturesque diary, but the domestic instrument would have twanged with discords. Hamilton was unselfish, and could not do enough for those he loved; but he was used to the first place, to the unquestioned yielding of it to his young high-mightiness by his clever aspiring friends, by the army of his common acquaintance, and in many ways by Washington himself. Had he married Angelica Schuyler, that independent, high-spirited, lively, adorable woman, probably they would have boxed each other's ears at the end of a week.

Hamilton made the dash on Staten Island with Lord Sterling, and in March went with General St. Clair and

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Colonel Carrington to negotiate with the British commissioners for the exchange of prisoners; before the battle of Springfield he was sent out to reconnoitre. Otherwise his days were taken up bombarding the Congress with letters representing the necessity of drafting troops to meet the coming emergencies.

He and Miss Betsey Schuyler had a very pretty plan, which was nothing less than that they should go to Europe on their wedding tour, Congress to find his presence necessary at the Court of France. The suggestion originated with Laurens, who had been asked to go as secretary to Franklin. He had no wish to go, and knowing Hamilton's ardent desire to visit Europe and growing impatience with his work, had recommended his name to the Congress. General Schuyler would have procured a leave of absence for his impending son-in-law, and sent the young couple to Europe with his blessing and a heavy wallet, but Hamilton would as soon have forged a man's name as travelled at his expense. He hoped that the Congress would send him. He was keenly alive to the value of studying Europe at first hand before he was called upon to help in the modelling of the new Republic, and the vision of wandering in historic lands with his bride kept him awake at night. Moreover, he was desperately tired of his life at Headquarters. When the expedition to Staten Island was in question, he asked Washington, through Lafayette, to give him the command of a battalion which happened to be without a field-officer. Washington refused, partly from those motives of policy to which he ever showed an almost niggling adherence, but more because he could not spare his most useful aide. Hamilton, who was bursting for action of any sort, retired to his detested little office in angry disappointment. But he was

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a philosopher. He adjusted himself to the Inevitable, and dismissed the matter from his mind, after registering a vow that he would take advantage of the first excuse which might offer to resign his position.

The Schuylers returned to Albany. The French fleet arrived, and hovered well beyond the range of British guns, having no desire to risk an engagement until reinforced. Its Admiral, Count Rochambeau, having a grievance, Hamilton advised a personal conference.

"We might suggest that he meet us halfway—say at Wethersfield, near Hartford," he added. "That would save us something in travelling expenses."

Washington sighed heavily. "We are worse off than you think," he said. "I might scrape together money enough for half the journey, but no more. Lafayette and his aide must go with us—to say nothing of the escort. Think of the innkeepers' bills, for ourselves and horses. What to do I confess I do not know, for I should confer with this Frenchman at once."

"Go we must, sir," said Hamilton, decidedly, "if we have to take up a collection—why not? If an object cannot be accomplished one way, try another." He stood up and emptied the contents of his pockets on the table. "Only five hundred beggarly continentals," he said ruefully. "However, who knows what treasures may line more careful pockets than mine? I know they will come forth as spontaneously. Have I your permission to try, sir?"

Washington nodded, and Hamilton ran downstairs, pressed Meade into service, and together they made the round of the officers' quarters. He returned at the end of an hour and threw a huge bundle of paper on the table. "Only eight thousand dollars, sir," he said. "It's the

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best that any man could do. But I think it may carry us through."

"It will have to," said Washington. "Remind me, my dear boy, if you see me eating too much. I have such an appetite!"

They set out on their journey a week later, having communicated with Rochambeau, who agreed to meet them at Wethersfield. All went well, for the wretched inns were not exorbitant, until they reached Hartford. They arrived late in the afternoon, weary and ravenous. After a bath and a glimpse of luxurious beds, they marched to the dining-room and sat down to a sumptuous repast, whose like had greeted neither nostril nor palate for many a day. The wines were mellow, the tobacco green, the conversation gay until midnight. Hamilton sang "The Drum," and many another song rang among the rafters. Washington retired first, bidding the youngsters enjoy themselves. The young men arose at their accustomed hour next morning, with appetites renewed, but waited in vain for their Chief. Hamilton finally knocked at his door. There was no response, and a servant told him that the General had gone out nearly an hour before. He went in search, bidding Lafayette and M'Henry remain behind. As he had anticipated, he found Washington in a secluded nook, engaged in prayer. He waited a few moments, then coughed respectfully. Washington immediately rose, his harassed face showing little relief.

"Is anything wrong, sir?" asked Hamilton, anxiously.

"Alas!" said the General, "I wonder that you, too, are not driven to prayer, to intercede for help in this distressing predicament. Think of that extravagant repast we consumed last night. God help me, but I was so famished I never gave a thought to consequences. Un-

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questionably, the breakfast will be on a like scale. *And we have but eight thousand dollars with which to pay the bill!"*

"It is true! I never gave the matter a thought—I am cursedly extravagant. And we must get home! I suppose we shall have to fast all the way. Well, we've fasted before, and the memory of last night's dinner may sustain us—"

"But this man's bill! How are we to meet it?"

"Shall I speak to him, sir? Tell him unreservedly our predicament—that these wretched eight thousand dollars are all we have in the world? Perhaps he is a good patriot, and will call the account square."

"Do," said Washington, "and come here and tell me what he says. I am too mortified to show my face. I shall not enter the house again."

Hamilton walked slowly to the house, little caring for his errand. He returned on a dead run.

"We are saved, sir!" he cried, almost in Washington's arms. "Governor Trumbull has sent word to all the hostleries that we are to be his guests while we are in the state of Connecticut!"

Washington said his prayers again, and ate two chickens for breakfast.

On the return from this conference, when approaching the house of General Benedict Arnold, opposite West Point, where they were invited for breakfast, Washington suddenly decided to accompany Lafayette, who wished to inspect some earthworks.

"You need not come," he said to Hamilton and M'Henry. "I know that you are both in love with Mrs. Arnold. Go on. We will join you presently."

The young men were greeted with effusion by the

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pretty hostess, with absent reserve by her husband. Mrs. Arnold left the room to order that the breakfast be delayed. While she was absent, a note was brought to Arnold. He opened it, turned green, and rising hastily, announced that his presence was demanded at West Point and left the room. The sound of a smothered scream and fall came from above. A moment later the aides heard the sound of galloping hoofs.

Their suspicions aroused, they ran outside. A messenger, with a despatch from Colonel Jameson, awaited Washington's arrival. Hamilton tore open the paper. It contained the news that a British spy had been captured within the lines. In an instant Hamilton and M'Henry were on their horses and off in pursuit of the fugitive. That Arnold was a traitor and had fled to the British warship, *Vulture,* hovering in Haverstraw Bay, a slower wit than Hamilton's would have assumed. The terrified scoundrel was too quick for them. He had ridden over a precipice to the shore below, and under protection of a flag of truce was far down the river when his pursuers sighted him. They returned with all speed.

I shall not repeat the oft-told tale of André's capture, trial, and death. Nowhere has it been so well told as by Hamilton himself, in a letter to Laurens, printed at the time and universally read. It is only necessary here to allude to his share in that unhappiest episode of the war. When Washington reached the house his aide was engaged in consoling Mrs. Arnold, who was shrieking and raving, weeping and fainting; imposing on Hamilton a task varied and puzzling, even to one of his schooling. But she was very young, very charming, and in a tragic plight. Washington himself wiped away a tear, and for a moment forgot the barely averted consequences of her husband's

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treason, while he assisted Hamilton in assuaging a grief so bitter and so appealing. As soon as was possible he sent her through the British lines.

But Hamilton quickly forgot Mrs. Arnold in his sympathy and admiration for the unfortunate André. He conceived a quick and poignant friendship for the brilliant accomplished young Englishman, with the dreamy soft face of a girl, and a mettle which had brought him to destruction. Hamilton did all he could to save him, short of suggesting to André to ask Sir Henry Clinton to offer Arnold in exchange. He enlisted the sympathy of the officers at West Point in the prisoner's behalf, gave up his leisure to diverting André's mind, and persuaded Washington to delay the execution and send an indirect suggestion to Clinton to offer the exchange himself. When all hope was over, he personally begged Washington to heed André's request for a soldier's death, and not condemn such a man to the gibbet. Washington gladly would have saved his interesting prisoner's life, and felt deeply for him, but again those motives of policy prevailed, and André was executed like a common malefactor.

VIII.

WASHINGTON was in temporary quarters—a cramped and wretched tavern—at Liberty Pole, New Jersey. The inaction being oppressive, Hamilton concentrated his thoughts on the condition and needs of the country.

I am sorry that the same spirit of indifference to public affairs prevails, [he wrote to Sears]. It is necessary we should rouse and begin to do our business in earnest, or we shall play a losing game,

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We must have a government with more power. We must have a tax in kind. We must have a foreign loan. We must have a bank on the true principles of a bank. We must have an administration distinct from Congress, and in the hands of single men under their orders. We must, above all things, have an army for the war. . . . We are told here there is to be a Congress of the neutral powers at the Hague for meditating of peace. God send it may be true. We want it; but if the idea goes abroad, ten to one if we do not fancy the thing done, and fall into a profound sleep till the cannon of the enemy waken us next campaign. This is our national character.

Hamilton, the High Priest of Energy, had long since declared war against the genius of the American people, who believed in God and the art of leisure. Hamilton believed in God and a cabinet of zealous ministers. He was already a thorn in the side of estimable but hesitant patriots, and in times to come his unremitting and remorseless energy was to be a subject of reproach by associates and enemies alike. Even Jefferson, that idol of the present as of the past democracy, had timidly declared against separation in 1774, while Hamilton, a boy of seventeen, had been the first to suggest the resort to arms, and incessant in his endeavours until the great result was accomplished. He had countless other schemes, and he knew that eventually he would succeed in driving the American people before the point of his quill. That his task would be long and arduous did not daunt him for a moment. By this time he knew every want of the country, and was determined upon the reorganisation of the government. The energy which is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the American nation to-day was generated by Hamilton, might, indeed, be said to be the persistence and diffusion of his ego. For the matter of that, all that is greatest in this American evolution of a century was typified in Hamilton. Not only his formidable energy,

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but his unqualified honour and integrity, his unquenchable optimism, his extraordinary nimbleness of mind and readiness of resource, his gay good-nature, high spirits, and buoyancy, his light philosophy effervescing above unsounded depths, his inability to see when he was beaten, his remorseless industry, his hard commonsense, combined with a versatile cleverness which makes for shallowness in another race, his careless generosity, his aptitude for detail and impatience of it, his reckless bravery in war and intrepidity in peace, even his highly strung nerves, excitability, and obliging readiness at all times for a fight, raise him high above history as the genius of the American race. The reverse side of the national character we owe to the greatest of his rivals; as will be seen hereafter.

During the sojourn at Liberty Pole, Washington and he sat through many nights discussing the imperative need of the reorganisation of the government, and the best methods by which it could be accomplished. The result was Hamilton's letter to James Duane, an important member of the Congress.

This letter, no doubt the most remarkable of its kind ever written, and as interesting to-day as when Hamilton conceived it, is far too long to be quoted. It began with an exhaustive analysis of the reasons for the failure of Congress to cope with a situation which was becoming more threatening every hour, and urged the example of the Grecian republics and the Swiss cantons against the attempted confederation of the States without a strong centralised government. Lacking a common tie of sufficient strength, the States would inevitably drift toward independent sovereignty, and they had given signal proof in the matter of raising troops, contributing money, and

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in their everlasting disputes about boundary lines, as to the absolute lack of any common public spirit. His remedy, in brief, was a convention of the States for the purpose of creating a Federal Constitution, the distributing of the powers of government into separate departments, with Presidents of War, Marine, and Trade, a secretary of Foreign Affairs, and a Financier, defining their prerogatives; the States to have no privileges beyond an internal police for the protection of the property and the rights of individuals, and to raise money by internal taxes; the army to be recruited on a permanent establishment. In addition, there was an elaborate system of taxation, by which the country could be supported in all its emergencies. His favourite plan of a National Bank was elaborated in minute detail, the immediate necessity for a foreign loan dwelt upon with sharp reproof, and examples given of the recruiting of armies in European states.

Out of a multitude of suggestions a few were adopted within a short time, but the great central suggestion, the calling of a convention for the purpose of creating a Federal Constitution, was to be hammered at for many weary years before jealous States and unconfident patriots could be persuaded to a measure so monarchical and so bold. But the letter is on record, and nothing more logical, far-sighted, and comprehensive ever was written. It contained the foundation-stones upon which this government of the United States stands to-day. Congress put on its spectacles and read it with many grunts, magnanimously expressing admiration for a youth who had fearlessly grappled with questions which addled older brains; but its audacious suggestions of a government greater

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than Congress, and of a bank which would add to their troubles, were not taken seriously for a moment.

Hamilton also found time to write a good many love letters. Here is one of them:—

I would not have you imagine, Miss, that I write you so often to gratify your wishes or please your vanity; but merely to indulge myself, and to comply with that restless propensity of my mind which will not be happy unless I am doing something in which you are concerned. This may seem a very idle disposition in a philosopher and a soldier, but I can plead illustrious examples in my justification. Achilles liked to have sacrificed Greece and his glory to a female captive, and Anthony lost a world for a woman. I am very sorry times are so changed as to oblige me to go to antiquity for my apology, but I confess, to the disgrace of the present time, that I have not been able to find as many who are as far gone as myself in the laudable Zeal of the fair sex. I suspect, however, if others knew the charm of my sweetheart as I do, I could have a great number of competitors. I wish I could give you an idea of her. You can have no conception of how sweet a girl she is. It is only in my heart that her image is truly drawn. She has a lovely form and still more lovely mind. She is all goodness, the gentlest, the dearest, the tenderest of her sex. Ah, Betsey, how I love her!

His reiterated demand for a foreign loan, and the sending of a special envoy to obtain it, at last wrung a reluctant consent from Congress. Lafayette was his politic suggestion, and Congress would have indorsed it, but that adventurous young hero had not come to America to return and beg money on his own doorstep. There was a prospect of fighting in the immediate future, and he was determined to add to his renown. The choice then lay between Hamilton and Laurens, who had received the thanks of Congress for his distinguished services in the field, and whose father had been a president of that body. Lafayette and all the Frenchmen were anxious that the mission be given to Hamilton. The former went

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to Philadelphia and talked to half the Congress. He offered Hamilton private letters which would introduce him to the best society of Europe; adding, "I intend giving you the *key* of the cabinet, as well as of the societies which influence them."

Laurens, by this time, was eager to go. His father, who had started for Holland as Minister Plenipotentiary, had been captured by the British and confined in the Tower of London; the foreign mission would give him an opportunity to attempt his liberation. Moreover, life was very dull at present, and he knew himself to be possessed of diplomatic talents. But he was also aware of Hamilton's ardent desire to visit Europe, all that it would mean to that insatiate mind, his weariness of his present position. Washington would give his consent to the temporary absence of Hamilton, for the French money was the vital necessity of the Republic's life, and he knew that his indomitable aide would not return without it. Therefore Laurens wrote to Hamilton, who was in Albany awaiting his wedding-day, that he should resign in his favour, and congratulated him on so brilliant and distinguished a honeymoon.

The struggle in Hamilton's mind was brief. The prospect of sailing with his bride on a long and delightful journey that could not fail to bring him highest honour had made his blood dance. Moreover, in the previous month Washington had again refused his request for an independent command. It took him but a short time to relinquish this cherished dream when he thought of the unhappy plight of Mr. Laurens, and remembered the deep anxiety of the son, often expressed. He wrote to Laurens, withdrawing in the most decisive terms. Laurens was not to be outdone. He loved his father,

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but he loved Hamilton more. He pressed the appointment upon his friend, protesting that the affairs of the elder Laurens would be quite as safe in his hands. Hamilton prevailed, and Congress, having waited amiably while the two martial youths had it out, unanimously appointed Laurens. He could not sail until February, and as soon as the matter was decided obtained leave of absence and repaired in all haste to Albany, to be present at Hamilton's wedding.

IX.

THE wedding of Alexander Hamilton and Elizabeth Schuyler was the most notable private event of the Revolution. The immense social and political consequence of the Schuylers, and the romantic fame of the young aide, of whom the greatest things possible were expected, brought the aristocracy of New York and the Jersies to Albany despite the inclement winter weather. The large house of the Schuylers gave a prolonged hospitality to the women, and the men lodged in the patriarchal little town. But although Hamilton was glad to see the Livingstons, Sterlings, and Boudinots again, the greater number of the guests interested him far less than a small group of weather-beaten soldiers, of which this occasion was the happy cause of reunion. Troup was there, full of youth and honours. He had received the thanks of Congress for his services at Saratoga, and been appointed secretary of the Board of War. Recently he had resigned from the army, and was completing his law studies. Nicolas Fish came with Lafayette, whose light artillery he commanded.

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He was known as a brave and gallant soldier, and so excellent a disciplinarian that he had won the approval and confidence of Washington. He still parted his little fringe in the middle, and his face was as chubby as ever, his eyes as solemn. Lafayette, who had brought a box full of clothes that had dazzled Paris, embraced Hamilton with tears, but they were soon deep in conjectures of the next campaign. Laurens, looking like a king in exile, wrung many hearts. Hamilton's brother aides, unfortunately, were the more closely bound by his absence, but they had despatched him with their blessing and much chaffing.

The hall of the Schuyler mansion was about twenty feet square and panelled in white. It was decorated with holly, and for three nights before the wedding illuminated by hundreds of wax candles, while the young people danced till three in the morning. The Schuyler house, long accustomed to entertaining, had never been gayer, and no one was more content than the chatelaine. Although she had been reasonably sure of Elizabeth, there was no telling at what moment the maiden might yield to the romantic mania of the time, and climb out of her window at night while Hamilton stood shivering below. Now all danger was past, and Mrs. Schuyler moved, large, placid, and still handsome, among her guests, beaming so affectionately whenever she met Mrs. Carter's flashing eyes that Peggy and Cornelia renewed their vows to elope when the hour and the men arrived. General Schuyler, once more on the crest of public approval, was always grave and stern, but he, too, breathed satisfaction and relief. He was a tall man of military appearance, powerful, muscular, slender; but as his nose was large and fleshy, and he wore a ragged-looking wig with wings like

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Washington's, he could not be called handsome. It was a noble countenance, however, and his black eyes flashed and pierced.

As for Hamilton and Miss Schuyler, who had a trunk full of charming new gowns, they were as happy as two children, and danced the night through. They were married on the 20th, in the drawing-room, in front of the splendid mantel, which the housewives had spent much time in admiring. The bride wore the white which became her best, made with a long pointed bodice and paniers, and lace that had been worn by the wife of the first patroon. She had risen to the dignity of a wig, and her mass of black hair was twisted mercilessly tight under the spreading white monstrosity to which her veil was attached. Hamilton wore a black velvet coat, as befitting his impending state. Its lining and the short trousers were of white satin. His shapely legs were in white silk, his feet in pumps with diamond buckles, the present of Lafayette. He, too, wore a wig,—a close one, with a queue,—but he got rid of it immediately after the ceremony, for it heated his head.

Hamilton had then reached his full height, about five feet six. His bride was perhaps three inches shorter. The world vowed that never had there been so pretty a couple, nor one so well matched in every way. Both were the perfection of make, and the one as fair and fresh as a Scot, the other a golden gipsy, the one all fire and energy, the other docile and tender, but with sufficient spirit and intelligence. It is seldom that the world so generously gives its blessing, but it might have withheld it, for all that Hamilton and his bride would have cared.

Hamilton's honeymoon was brief. There was a mass of correspondence awaiting him, and no place for a bride

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in the humble Dutch house at New Windsor where Washington had gone into winter quarters. But the distance was not great, and he could hope for flying leaves of absence. Washington was not unsympathetic to lovers; he had been known to unbend and advise his aides when complications threatened or a siege seemed hopeless; and he had given Hamilton the longest leave possible. Nevertheless, the bridegroom set forth, one harsh January morning, on his long journey, over roads a foot deep in snow, and through solitary winter forests, with anything but an impassioned desire to see General Washington again. Had he been returning to the command of a corps, with a prospect of stirring events as soon as the snow melted, he would have spurred his horse with high satisfaction, even though he left a bride behind him; but to return to a drudgery which he hated the more for having escaped it for three enchanted weeks, made his spirit turn its back to the horse's head. He resolved anew to resign if an opportunity offered. Four years of that particular sort of devotion to the patriot cause were enough. He wished to demonstrate his patriotism in other ways. He had accomplished the primary object for which Washington had pressed him into service, and he believed that the war was nearing its finish; there was nothing he could now do at Headquarters which the other aides could not do as well, and he wanted military excitement and renown while their possibilities existed.

X.

THE first task awaiting him upon his arrival at Headquarters was to draw up a letter of instruction for Laurens

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a task which required minute care; for on its suggestions, as much as on Laurens's brilliant talents, depended the strength of a mission whose failure might mean that of the American arms. Laurens had requested the letter, and told Hamilton that he should be guided by it. He did not anticipate a royal condition of mind which would prompt him practically to carry off the French money-bags under the king's astonished nose, and he knew Hamilton's command of every argument connected with the painful subject of financial needs. Hamilton drew up a lucid and comprehensive letter, in nine parts, which Laurens could study at his leisure on the frigate, *Alliance;* then attacked his accumulated duties. They left him little leisure to remember he was a bridegroom, although he occasionally directed his gaze toward the North with some longing. His freedom approached, however, and it was swift and unexpected.

It came on the 16th of February. His office was in his bedroom. He had just completed a letter containing instructions of an important nature for the commissary, and started in search of Tilghman, whose duty it was to see it safely delivered. On the stairs he passed Washington, whose brow was heavy. The General, with that brevity which was an indication of his passionate temper fighting against a self-control which he must have knocked flat with great satisfaction at times, ejaculated that he wished to speak with him at once. Hamilton replied that he would wait upon him immediately, and hastened to Tilghman's office, wondering what had occurred to stir the depths of his Chief. He was but a moment with Tilghman, but on the stairs he met Lafayette, who was in search of him upon a matter of business. It is possible that Hamilton should not have permitted himself to be

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detained, but at all events he did, for perhaps two minutes. Suddenly he became conscious that Washington was standing at the head of the stairs, and wondering if he had awaited him there, he abruptly broke off his conversation with Lafayette, and ran upward. Washington looked as if about to thunder anathema upon the human race. He had been annoyed since dawn, and his passions fairly flew at this last indignity.

"Colonel Hamilton!" he exclaimed. "You have kept me waiting at the head of the stairs these ten minutes. I must tell you, sir, you treat me with disrespect."

Hamilton's eyes blazed and his head went back, but his quick brain leapt to the long-desired opportunity. He replied as calmly as if his heart were not thumping, "I am not conscious of it, sir, but since you have thought it necessary to tell me so, we part."

"Very well, sir!" replied Washington, "if it be your choice!" He turned his back and strode to his office.

Hamilton went to his room with a light heart, feeling as if the pigeon-holes were marching out of his brain. The breach was Washington's; he himself had answered with dignity, and could leave with a clear conscience. He had not kept Washington waiting above four minutes, and he did not feel that an apology was necessary.

"Oh," he thought aloud, "I feel as if I had grown wings." He would return to his bride for a few weeks, then apply once more for a command.

There was a knock, and Tilghman entered. The young men looked at each other in silence for a moment; Tilghman with an almost comical anxiety, Hamilton with alert defiance.

"Well?" demanded Hamilton.

"I come from the Chief—ambassador extraordinary.

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Look out of the window, or I shall not have courage to go on. He's put the devil to bed and is monstrous sorry this misunderstanding has occurred—"

"Misunderstanding?" snorted Hamilton.

"You know my love of euphony, Hamilton. Pray let me finish. I'd rather be Laurens on my way to beg. What is a king to a lion? But seriously, my dear, the Chief is desperately sorry this has occurred. He has deputed me to assure you of his great confidence in your abilities, integrity, and usefulness, and of his desire, in a candid conversation, to heal a difference which could not have happened but in a moment of passion. Do go and see him at once, and then we shall all sleep in peace to-night."

But Hamilton shook his head decidedly. "You know how tired I am of all this," he said, "and that I can be as useful and far more agreeably active in the field. If I consent to this interview, I am lost. I have never doubted the Chief's affection for me, but he is also the most astute of men, and knows my weakness. If, arguments having failed, he puts his arm about my shoulders and says, 'My boy, *do* not desert me,' I shall melt, and vow that neither bride nor glory could beckon me from him. So listen attentively, *mon ami,* and deliver my answer as follows: 1st. I have taken my resolve in a manner not to be revoked. 2d. As a conversation could serve no other purpose than to produce explanations, mutually disagreeable, though I certainly will not refuse an interview if he desires it, yet I should be happy if he would permit me to decline it. 3d. That, though determined to leave the family, the same principles which have kept me so long in it will continue to direct my conduct toward him when out of it. 4th. That I do not wish to distress him

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or the public business by quitting him before he can derive other assistance by the return of some of the gentlemen who are absent. 5th. And that in the meantime it depends on him to let our behaviour to each other be the same as if nothing had happened."

Tilghman heaved a deep sigh. "Then you really mean to go?" he said. "Heartless wretch! Have you no mercy on us? Headquarters will be a tomb, with Washington reposing on top. Think of the long and solemn breakfasts, the funeral dinners, the brief but awful suppers. Washington will never open his mouth again, and I never had the courage to speak first. If ever you deign to visit us, you will find that we have lost the power of speech. I repeat that you have no heart in your body."

Hamilton laughed. "If you did not know that I love you, you would not sit there and revile me. No family has ever been happier than ours. In four years there has not been a quarrel until to-day. I can assure you that my heart will ache when the time comes to leave you, but I really had got to the end of my tether. I have long felt as if I could not go on another day."

"'Tis grinding, monotonous work," admitted Tilghman, "and we've all wondered how you have stood it as long as this—every bit of you was made for action. Well, I'll take your message to the Chief."

Washington consented to waive the explanation and sent Hamilton another message, thanking him for consenting to remain until Harrison and Meade returned.

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XI.

LITTLE Mrs. Hamilton was delighted with the course affairs had taken, and pleaded for resignation from the army. But to this Hamilton would not hearken. Anxious as he was for the war to finish, that he might begin upon the foundations of home and fortune, he had no intention of deserting a cause to which he had pledged himself, and in which there still was a chance for him to achieve distinction. So far, his ambitions were wholly military. If the profound thought he had given to the present and future needs of the Republic was not wholly impersonal; if he took for granted that he had a part to play when the Revolution finished, it was little more than a dream at present. His very temperament was martial, the energy and impetuosity of his nature were in their element on the battlefield, and he would rather have been a great general than the elder Pitt. But although there is no reason to doubt that he would have become a great general, had circumstance favoured his pet ambition, yet Washington was a better judge of the usefulness of his several abilities than he was himself. Not only had that reader of men made up his mind that a brain like his favourite's should not be wasted on the battlefield,—left there, perhaps, while dolts escaped, for Hamilton had no appreciation of fear or danger,—but he saw in him the future statesman, fertile, creative, executive, commanding; and he could have no better training than at a desk in his office. Phenomenally precocious, even mature, as Hamilton's brain had been when they met that morning on the Heights of Harlem, these four years had given it a structural growth which it

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would not have acquired in camp life, and to which few men of forty were entitled. Of this fact Hamilton was appreciative, and he was too philosophical to harbour regrets; but that period was over now, and he wanted to fight.

On April 27th he wrote to Washington, asking for employment during the approaching campaign, suggesting the command of a light corps, and modestly but decidedly stating his claims.

Washington was greatly embarrassed. Every arbitrary appointment caused a ferment in the army, where jealousies were hotter than martial ardours. Washington was politic above all things, but to refuse Hamilton a request after their quarrel and parting was the last thing he wished to do. He felt that he had no choice, however, and wrote at once, elaborating his reasons for refusal, ending as follows:—

> My principal concern rises from an apprehension that you will impute my refusal of your request to other motives than those I have expressed, but I beg you to be assured I am only influenced by the reasons I have mentioned.

Hamilton knew him too well to misunderstand him, but he was deeply disappointed. He retired into the library behind the drawing-room of the Schuyler mansion, and wrote another and a more elaborate letter to Robert Morris. He began with a reiteration of the impotence of Congress, its loss of the confidence of this country and of Europe, the necessity for an executive ministry, and stated that the time was past to indulge in hopes of foreign aid. The States must depend upon themselves, and their only hope lay in a National Bank. There had been some diffidence in his previous letter. There was none in this, and he had a greater mastery of the subject. In some-

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thing like thirty pages of close writing, he lays down every law, extensive and minute, for the building of a National Bank, and not the most remarkable thing about this letter is the psychological knowledge it betrays of the American people. Having despatched it, he wrote again to Washington, demonstrating that his case was dissimilar from those the Chief had quoted. He disposed of each case in turn, and his presentation of his own claims was equally unanswerable. Washington, who was too wise to enter into a controversy with Hamilton's pen, did not reply to the letter, but made up his mind to do what he could for him, although still determined there should be no disaffection in the army of his making.

Meanwhile Hamilton received letters from Lafayette, begging him to hasten South and share his exile; from Washington, asking advice; and from members of the family, reminding him of their affection and regret. Tilghman's is characteristic:—

Headquarters, 27th April.

MY DEAR HAMILTON: Between me and thee there is a gulf, or I should not have been thus long without seeing you. My faith is strong, but not strong enough to attempt walking on the waters. You must not suppose from my dealing so much in Scripture phrase that I am either drunk with religion or with wine, though had I been inclined to the latter I might have found a jolly companion in my lord, who came here yesterday. We have not a word of news. . . . I must go over and see you soon, for I am not yet weaned from you, nor do I desire to be. I will not present so cold words as compliments to Mrs. Hamilton. She has an equal share of the best wishes of

Your most affectionate

TILGHMAN.

The following was from Laurens:—

I am indebted to you, my dear Hamilton, for two letters: the first from Albany, as masterly a piece of cynicism as ever was penned;

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the other from Philadelphia, dated the second March; in both you mention a design of retiring, which makes me extremely unhappy. I would not wish to have you for a moment withdraw from the public service; at the same time my friendship for you, and knowledge of your value to the United States, makes me most ardently desire that you should fill only the first offices of the Republic. I was flattered with an account of your being elected a delegate from New York, and am much mortified not to hear it confirmed by yourself. I must confess to you that at the present stage of the war, I should prefer your going into Congress, and from thence becoming a minister plenipotentiary for peace, to your remaining in the army, where the dull system of seniority, and the *tableau*, would prevent you from having the important commands to which you are entitled; but, at any rate, I will not have you renounce your rank unless you entered the career above mentioned. Your private affairs cannot require such immediate and close attention. You speak like a *paterfamilias* surrounded with a numerous progeny.

On the 26th of May he had an appreciative letter from Robert Morris, thanking him for his suggestions, and assuring him of their acceptability. He promises a bank on Hamilton's plan, although with far less capital; still it may afterward be increased to any extent.

The northern land was full of amenities, the river gay with pleasure barges. The French gardens about the Schuyler mansion were romantic for saunterings with the loveliest of brides; the seats beneath the great trees commanded the wild heights opposite. Forty of the finest horses in the country were in General Schuyler's stables, and many carriages. There was a constant stream of distinguished guests. But Hamilton, who could dally pleasurably for a short time, had no real affinity for anything but work. There being no immediate prospect of fighting, he retired again to the library and began that series of papers called *The Continentalist,* which were read as attentively as if peace had come. They examined the defects of the existing league of states, their jealousies,

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which operated against the formation of a Federal government, then proceeded to enumerate the powers with which such a government should be clothed.

Hamilton did not wait with any particular grace, but even the desired command came to him after a reasonable period of attempted patience. At Washington's request he accompanied him to Newport to confer with Rochambeau. Although the Chief did not allude to Hamilton's last letter, their intercourse on this journey was as natural and intimate as ever; and Washington did not conceal his pleasure in the society of this the most captivating and endearing of his many young friends. After the conference was over, Hamilton returned to Albany for a brief visit, then determined to force Washington to show his hand. He joined the army at Dobbs Ferry, and sent the Chief his commission. Tilghman returned with it, express haste, and the assurance that the General would endeavour to give him a command, nearly such as he could desire in the present circumstance of the army. Hamilton had accomplished his object. He retained his commission and quartered with General Lincoln.

When Washington arrived at Dobbs Ferry and went into temporary quarters, he gave a large dinner to the French officers, and invited Hamilton to preside.

His graceful manners and witty speeches provoked universal admiration [runs the pen of a contemporary]. He was the youngest and smallest man present. His hair was turned back from the forehead, powdered, and queued at the back. His face was boyishly fair, and lighted up with intelligence and genius. Washington, grave, elegant, and hospitable, sat at the side of the table, with the accomplished Count de Rochambeau on his right. The Duke de Luzerne occupied a seat opposite. General Knox was present, and so was Baron Steuben.

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Shortly afterward, Hamilton attended a council of war, at Washington's invitation. The squadron of De Grasse was approaching the coast of Virginia. For the second time, Washington was obliged to give up his cherished scheme of marching on New York, for it was now imperative to meet Cornwallis in the South. The Chief completely hoodwinked Clinton as to his immediate plans, Robert Morris raised the funds for moving the army, and Hamilton obtained his command. To his high satisfaction, Fish was one of his officers. Immediately before his departure for the South he wrote to his wife. He had attained his desire, but he was too unhappy to be playful. A portion of the letter is as follows:—

A part of the army, my dear girl, is going to Virginia, and I must, of necessity, be separated at a much greater distance from my beloved wife. I cannot announce the fatal necessity without feeling everything that a fond husband can feel. I am unhappy;—I am unhappy beyond expression. I am unhappy because I am to be so remote from you; because I am to hear from you less frequently than I am accustomed to do. I am miserable because I know you will be so; I am wretched at the idea of flying so far from you, without a single hour's interview, to tell you all my pains and all my love. But I cannot ask permission to visit you. It might be thought improper to leave my corps at such a time and upon such an occasion. I must go without seeing you—I must go without embracing you:—alas! I must go.

The allied armies moved on the 22d of August and arrived within two miles of the enemy's works at York Town, on the 28th of September. Hamilton's light infantry was attached to the division of Lafayette, who joined the main army with what was left of his own. Laurens was also in command of a company of light infantry in the young French general's division. He had acquitted himself brilliantly in France, returning, in spite

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of all obstacles and the discouragement of Franklin, with two and a half million livres in cash, part of a subsidy of six millions of livres granted by the French king; but he felt that to be in the field again with Washington, Hamilton, Lafayette, and Fish was higher fortune than successful diplomacy.

The allied army was twelve thousand strong; Cornwallis had about seventy-eight hundred men. The British commander was intrenched in the village of York Town, the main body of his troops encamped on the open grounds in the rear. York Town is situated on a peninsula formed by the rivers York and James, and into this narrow compass Cornwallis had been driven by the masterly tactics of Lafayette. The arrival of De Grasse's fleet cut off all hope of retreat by water. He made but a show of opposition during the eight days employed by the Americans in bringing up their ordnance and making other preparations. On the 9th the trenches were completed, and the Americans began the bombardment of the town and of the British frigates in the river. It continued for nearly twenty-four hours, and so persistent and terrific was the cannonading, that the British, being unfortunate in their embrasures, withdrew most of their cannon and made infrequent reply. On the night of the 11th new trenches were begun within two and three hundred yards of the British works. While they were completing, the enemy opened new embrasures, from which their fire was far more effective than at first. Two redoubts flanked this second parallel and desperately annoyed the men in the trenches. It was determined to carry them by assault, and the American light infantry and De Viomenil's grenadiers and chasseurs were ordered to hold themselves in readiness for the attack. Laurens,

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with eighty men, was to turn the redoubt in order to intercept the retreat of the garrison, but Hamilton, for the moment, saw his long-coveted opportunity glide by him. Washington had determined to give it to our hero's old Elizabethtown tutor, Colonel Barber, conceiving that the light infantry which had made the Virginia campaign was entitled to precedence. Hamilton was standing with Major Fish when the news of this arrangement was brought to him. He reached the General's tent in three bounds, and poured forth the most impetuous appeal he had ever permitted himself to launch at Washington. But he was terribly in earnest, and the prospect of losing this magnificent opportunity tore down the barriers of his self-possession. "It is my right to attack, sir!" he concluded passionately. "I am the officer on duty!" Washington had watched his flushed nervous face and flashing eyes, which had far more command in their glances than appeal, and he never made great mistakes: he knew that if he refused this request, Hamilton never would forgive him.

"Very well," he said. "Take it."

Hamilton ran back to Fish, crying: "We have it. We have it;" and immediately began to form his troops. The order was issued to advance in two columns, and after dark the march began, Hamilton leading the advance corps. The French were to attack the redoubt on the right.

The signal was a shell from the American batteries, followed by one from the French. The instant the French shell ascended, Hamilton gave the order to advance at the point of the bayonet; then his impatience, too long gnawing at its curb, dominated him, and he ran ahead of his men and leaped to the abattis. For a half moment he

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stood alone on the parapet, then Fish reached him, and together they encouraged the rest to come on. Hamilton turned and sprang into the ditch, Fish following. The infantry was close behind, and surmounting the abattis, ditch, and palisades, leaped into the work. Hamilton had disappeared, and they feared he had fallen, but he was investigating; he suddenly reappeared, and formed the troops in the redoubt. It surrendered almost immediately. The attack took but nine minutes, so irresistible was the impetuosity of the onslaught. Hamilton gave orders at once to spare every man who had ceased to fight. When Colonel Campbell advanced to surrender, one of the American captains seized a bayonet and drew back to plunge it into the Englishman's breast. Hamilton thrust it aside, and Campbell was made prisoner by Laurens. Washington was delighted. "Few cases," he said, "have exhibited greater proofs of intrepidity, coolness, and firmness than were shown on this occasion." On the 17th, when Washington received the proposition for surrender from Cornwallis, he sent for Hamilton and asked his opinion of the terms. To Laurens was given the honour of representing the American army at the conference before the surrender. Tilghman rode, express haste, to Philadelphia with the first news of the surrender of Cornwallis and his army.

Hamilton's description of his part in the conquest that virtually put an end to the war is characteristic.

> Two nights ago, my Eliza [he wrote], my duty and my honour obliged me to take a step in which your happiness was too much risked. I commanded an attack upon one of the enemy's redoubts; we carried it in an instant and with little loss. You will see the particulars in the Philadelphia papers. There will be, certainly, nothing more of this kind; all the rest will be by approach; and if there should be another occasion, it would not fall to my turn to execute it.

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"It is to be hoped so," she said plaintively to her mother. "Else shall I no longer need to wear a wig."

XII.

THE next few years may be passed over quickly; they are not the most interesting, though not the least happy of Hamilton's life. He returned home on furlough after the battle of York Town and remained in his father-in-law's hospitable home until the birth of his boy, on the 22d of January. Then, having made up his mind that there was no further work for him in the army, and that Britain was as tired of the war as the States, he announced his intention to study for the bar. His friends endeavoured to dissuade him from a career whose preparation was so long and arduous, and reminded him of the public offices he could have for asking. But Hamilton was acquainted with his capacity for annihilating work, and at this time he was not conscious of any immediate ambition but of keeping his wife in a proper style and of founding a fortune for the education of his children. His military ambition had been so possessing that the sudden and brilliant finish at York Town of his power to gratify it had dwarfed for awhile any other he may have cherished.

He took a little house in the long street on the river front, and invited Troup to live with him. They studied together. He had been the gayest of companions, the most courted of favourites, since his return from the wars. For four months even his wife and Troup had, save on Sundays, few words with him on unlegal matters. His

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brain excluded every memory, every interest. For the first time he omitted to write regularly to Mrs. Mitchell, Hugh Knox, and Peter Lytton. All day and half the night he walked up and down his library, or his father-in-law's, reading, memorising, muttering aloud. His friends vowed that he marched the length and width of the Confederacy. He never gave a more striking exhibition of his control over the powers of his intellect than this. The result was that at the end of four months he obtained a license to practise as an attorney, and published a "Manual on the Practice of Law," which, Troup tells us, "served as an instructive grammar to future students, and became the groundwork of subsequent enlarged practical treatises." If it be protested that these feats were impossible, I can only reply that they are historic facts.

It was during these months of study that Aaron Burr came to Albany.

This young man, also, was not unknown to fame; and the period of the Revolution is the one on which Burr's biographers should dilate, for it was the only one through which he passed in a manner entirely to his credit. He was now in Albany, striving for admittance to the bar, but handicapped by the fact that he had studied only two years, instead of the full three demanded by law.

While Burr did not belong to the aristocracy of the country, his family not ranking by any means with the Schuylers, Van Rensselaers, Livingstons, Jays, Morrises, Roosevelts, and others of that small and haughty band, still he came of excellent and respectable stock. His father had been the Rev. Aaron Burr, President of Princeton College, and his mother the daughter of the famous Jonathan Edwards. He was quick-witted and brilliant; and there is no adjective which qualifies his am-

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bition. He was a year older than Hamilton, about an inch taller, and very dark. His features were well cut, his eyes black, glittering, and cold; his bearing dignified but unimposing, for he bent his shoulders and walked heavily. His face was not frank, even in youth, and grew noticeably craftier. He and Hamilton were the greatest fops in dress of their time; but while the elegance and beauty of attire sat with a peculiar fitness on Hamilton, seeming but the natural continuation of his high-bred face and easy erect and graceful bearing, Burr always looked studiously well-dressed. In regard to their height, a similar impression prevailed. One never forgot Burr's small stature, and often commented upon it. Comment upon Hamilton's size was rare, his proportions and motions were so harmonious; when he was on the platform, that ruthless test of inches, he dominated and controlled every brain in the audience, and his enemies vowed he was in league with the devil.

Burr brought letters to General Schuyler, and was politely given the run of the library. He and Hamilton had met casually in the army, but had had no opportunity for acquaintance. At this time the law was a subject of common interest, and they exchanged many opinions. There was no shock of antagonism at first, and for that matter they asked each other to dinner as long as Hamilton lived. But Hamilton estimated him justly at once, although, as Burr was as yet unconscious of the depths of his own worst qualities, the most astute reader of character hardly would suspect them. But Hamilton read that he was artificial and unscrupulous, and too selfish to serve the country in any of her coming needs. Still, he was brilliant and fascinating, and Hamilton asked him to his home. Burr, at first, was agreeably attracted to Hamilton,

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whose radiant disposition warmed his colder nature; but when he was forced to accept the astounding fact that Hamilton had prepared himself for the bar in four months, digesting and remembering a mountain of knowledge that cost other men the labour of years, and had prepared a Manual besides, he experienced the first convulsion of that jealousy which was to become his controlling passion in later years. Indeed, he established the habit with that first prolonged paroxysm, and he asked himself sullenly why a nameless stranger, from an unheard-of Island, should have the unprecedented success which this youth had had. Social victory, military glory, the preference of Washington, the respect and admiration of the most eminent men in the country, a horde of friends who talked of him as if he were a demi-god, an alliance by marriage with the greatest family in America, a father-in-law to advance any man's ambitions, a fascination which had kept the women talking until he married, and finally a memory and a legal faculty which had so astounded the bar—largely composed of exceptional men—that it could talk of nothing else: it was enough for a lifetime, and the man was only twenty-five. What in heaven's name was to be expected of him before he finished? The more Burr brooded, the more enraged he became. He had been brought up to think himself extraordinary, although his guardian had occasionally birched him when his own confidence had disturbed the peace; he was intensely proud of his military career, and aware of his fitness for the bar. But in the blaze of Hamilton's genius he seemed to shrivel; and as for having attempted to prepare himself for practice in four months, he might as well have grafted wings to his back and expected them to grow. It was some consolation to reflect that, as aide and confidential

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secretary for four years to Washington, Hamilton had been a student of the law of nations, and that thus his mind was peculiarly fitted to grasp what confronts most men as a solid wall to be taken down stone by stone; also that himself acknowledged no rival where the affections of women were concerned. But while he lifted the drooping head of his pride, and tied it firmly to a stake with many strong words, he chose to regard Hamilton as a rival, and the idea grew until it possessed him.

In July Robert Morris, after some correspondence, persuaded Hamilton to accept the office of Continental Receiver for a short time.

> Your former situation in the army [he wrote], the present situation of that very army, your connexions in the state, your perfect knowledge of men and measures, and the abilities with which heaven has blessed you, will give you a fine opportunity to forward the public service.

Hamilton, who had no desire to interrupt his studies, was placed in a position which gave him no choice; his sense of public duty grew steadily.

> For my part [he wrote to Morris], considering the late serious misfortune to our ally, the spirit of reformation, of wisdom, and of unanimity, which seems to have succeeded to that of blunder and dissension in the British government, and the universal reluctance of these states to do what is right, I cannot help viewing our situation as critical, and I feel it the duty of every citizen to exert his faculties to the utmost.

But in spite of the onerous and disagreeable duties of his position, he continued to pursue the course of study necessary for admission to the bar as a counsellor. He also found time to write a letter to Meade. The following extract will show that the severity of his great task was over, and that he was once more alive to that

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domestic happiness to which so large a part of his nature responded.

You reproach me with not having said enough about our little stranger. When I wrote last I was not sufficiently acquainted with him to give you his character. I may now assure you that your daughter, when she sees him, will not consult you about her choice, or will only do it in respect to the rules of decorum. He is truly a very fine young gentleman, the most agreeable in conversation and manners of any I ever knew, nor less remarkable for his intelligence and sweetness of temper. You are not to imagine by my beginning with his mental qualifications that he is defective in personal. It is agreed on all hands that he is handsome; his features are good, his eye is not only sprightly and expressive, but it is full of benignity. His attitude in sitting is, by connoisseurs, esteemed graceful, and he has a method of waving his hand that announces the future orator. He stands, however, rather awkwardly, and as his legs have not all the delicate slimness of his father's, it is feared he may never excel as much in dancing, which is probably the only accomplishment in which he will not be a model. If he has any fault in manners, he laughs too much. He has now passed his seventh month.

Happy by temperament, Hamilton was at this time happier in his conditions — barring the Receivership — than any vague, wistful, crowded dream had ever presaged. His wife was adorable and pretty, sprightly and sympathetic, yet accomplished in every art of the Dutch housewife; and although he was far too modest to boast, he was privately convinced that his baby was the finest in the Confederacy. He had a charming little home, and Troup, the genial, hearty, and solid, was a member of it. In General and Mrs. Schuyler he had found genuine parents, who strove to make him forget that he had ever been without a home. He had been forced to refuse offers of assistance from his father-in-law again and again. He would do nothing to violate his strong sense of personal independence; he had half of the arrears of his

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pay, Troup his share of the expenses of the little house. He knew that in a short time he should be making an income. The cleverest of men, however, can be hoodwinked by the subtle sex. The great Saratoga estate of the Schuylers furnished the larder of the Hamiltons with many things which the young householder was far too busy to compare with his slender purse.

He heard constantly from his friends in the army, and finally was persuaded to sit for a portrait, to be the common property of six or eight of them. Money was desperately tight, they could not afford a copy apiece, but each was to possess it for two months at a time so long as he lived; he who survived the others to dispose of it as he chose. For Hamilton to sit still and look in one direction for half an hour was nothing short of misery, even with Betsey, Troup, and the Baby to amuse him; and only the head, face, stock, and front of the coat were finished. But the artist managed to do himself justice with the massive spirited head, the deep-set mischievous eyes, whose lightnings never were far from the surface; the humour in the remarkable curves of the mouth, the determination and suppressed energy of the whole face. It was a living portrayal, and Betsey parted from it with tears. When she saw it again her eyes were dim with many tears. The last of its owners to survive fell far into poverty, and sold it to one of her sons. It is to-day as fresh, as alive with impatient youth and genius, as when Hamilton estimated portrait painters thieves of time.

Meanwhile a compliment was paid to him which upset his plans, and placed him for a short time in the awkward position of hesitating between private desires and public duty: he was elected by the New York legislature, and

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almost unanimously, a delegate to Congress. Troup brought him the news as he was walking on the broad street along the river front, muttering his Blackstone, oblivious of his fellow-citizens.

"Go to Congress!" he exclaimed. "Who goes to that ramshackle body that is able to keep out of it? Could not they find someone else to send to distinguish himself by failure? I've my living to make. If a man in these days manages to support his wife and child, there is nothing else he can do which so entitles him to the esteem of his fellow-citizens."

"True," said Troup, soothingly; "there certainly is nothing in that body of old women and lunatics, perpetually bickering with thirteen sovereign, disobedient, and jealous States, to tempt the ambition of any man; nor, ordinarily, to appeal to his sense of usefulness. But just at present there are several questions before it with which it is thought you can cope more successfully than any man living. So I think you ought to go, and so does General Schuyler. I know all that you will sacrifice, domestic as well as pecuniarily—but remember, you solemnly dedicated yourself to the service of this country."

"I'm not likely to forget it, and I am willing to sacrifice anything if I am convinced of my usefulness in a given direction, but I see no chance of accomplishing aught in Congress, of doing this country any service until it is a nation, not a sack of scratching cats."

Not only was great pressure brought to bear upon him, but he was not long convincing himself that it was his duty to take his knowledge of certain subjects vexing the Confederation, to the decrepit body which was feebly striving to save the country from anarchy. He had given little attention to the general affairs of the country

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during the past six months, but an examination of them fired his zeal. He accepted the appointment, and returned to his law books and his dispiriting struggle with the taxes.

In the autumn Hamilton received the second of those heavy blows by which he was reminded that in spite of his magnetism for success he was to suffer like other mortals. Laurens was dead—killed in a petty skirmish which he was so loath to miss that he had bolted to it from a sick-bed. Hamilton mourned him passionately, and never ceased to regret him. He was mercurial only among his lighter feelings. The few people he really loved were a part of his daily thoughts, and could set his heartstrings vibrating at any moment. Betsey consoled, diverted, and bewitched him, but there were times when he would have exchanged her for Laurens. The perfect friendship of two men is the deepest and highest sentiment of which the finite mind is capable; women miss the best in life.

In October Hamilton resigned the Receivership, having brought an honourable amount of order out of chaos and laid down the law for the guidance of future officials. November came, and he set off for Philadelphia philosophically, though by no means with a light heart. The baby was too young to travel; he was obliged to send his little family to General Schuyler's, with no hope of seeing them again for months, and a receding prospect of offering them a home in New York. His father-in-law, not unmindful that consolation was needed, drove him two-thirds of the distance, thus saving him a long ride, or its alternative, the heavy coach. In Philadelphia he found sufficient work awaiting him to drive all personal matters out of his head.

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It was during this year of hard work and little result that he renewed an acquaintance with James Madison, Jr., afterward fourth President of the United States, and Gouverneur Morris, one of the most brilliant and disinterested young men in the country, now associated with Robert Morris in the Department of Finance. With the last the acquaintance ripened into a lifelong and intimate friendship; with Madison the friendship was equally ardent and intimate while it lasted. Madison had the brain of a statesman, energy and persistence in crises, immense industry, facility of speech, a broad contempt for the pretensions and mean bickerings of the States, and a fairly national outlook. As Hamilton would have said, he "thought continentally." But he lacked individuality. He was too patriotic, too sincere to act against his principles, but his principles could be changed by a more powerful and magnetic brain than his own, and the inherent weakness in him demanded a stronger nature to cling to. It happened that he and Hamilton, when they met again in Congress, thought alike on many subjects, and they worked together in harmony from the first; nevertheless, he was soon in the position of a double to that towering and energetic personality, and worshipped it. In their letters the two young men sign themselves, "yours affectionately," "yours with deep attachment," which between men—I suppose—means something. So noticeable was Madison's devotion to the most distinguished young man of the day, and a few years later so absorbed was he into the huge personality of his early friend's bitterest enemy, that John Randolph once exclaimed in wrath, "Madison always was some great man's mistress—first Hamilton's, then Jefferson's;" a remark

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which was safe in the days of our ancestors, when life was all work and no satiety.

Gouverneur Morris had sacrificed home, inheritance, and ties in the cause of the Revolution, most of his family remaining true to the crown. His education was thorough, however, and subsequently he had nine years of Europe, of which he left to posterity an entertaining record. Tall, handsome, a wit, a beau, notable for energy in Congress, erratic, caustic, cynical, but the warmest of friends, he was a pet of society, a darling of women, and trusted by all men. He and Hamilton had much in common, and to some degree he took Laurens's place; not entirely, for Laurens's idealism gave him a pedestal in Hamilton's memory which no other man but Washington ever approached; and Morris was brutal in his cynicism, placing mankind but a degree higher than the beasts of the forest. But heart and brain endeared him to Hamilton, and no man had a loftier or more burning patriotism. As for himself, he loved and admired Hamilton above all men. He was as strong in his nationalism, believing Union under a powerful central government to be the only hope of the States. Both he and Madison were leaders; but both, even then, were willing to be led by Hamilton, who was several years their junior.

The three young enthusiasts made a striking trio of contrasts as they sat one evening over their port and walnuts in a private room of a coffee-house, where they had met to discuss the problems convulsing the unfortunate country. Madison had the look of a student, a taciturn intellectual visage. He spoke slowly, weightily, and with great precision. Morris had, even then, an expression of cynicism and contempt on his handsome bold face, and

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he swore magnificently whenever his new wooden leg interfered with his comfort or dignity. Hamilton, with his fair mobile face, powerful, penetrating, delicate, illuminated by eyes full of fire and vivacity, but owing its chief attraction to a mouth as sweet as it was firm and humorous, made the other men look almost heavy. Madison was carelessly attired, the other two with all the picturesque elegance of their time.

"A debt of $42,000,000," groaned Morris, "interest $2,400,000; Robert Morris threatening to resign; delirious prospect of panic in consequence; national spirit with which we began the war, a stinking wick under the tin extinguisher of States' selfishness, stinginess, and indifference—caused by the natural reversion of human nature to first principles after the collapse of that enthusiasm which inflates mankind into a bombastic pride of itself; Virginia pusillanimous, Rhode Island an old beldam standing on the village pump and shrieking disapproval of everything; Jay, Adams, and Franklin, after years of humiliating mendicancy, their very hearts wrinkled in the service of the stupidest country known to God or man, shoved by a Congress not fit to black their boots under the thumb of the wiliest and most disingenuous diplomatist in Europe—much France cares for our interests, provided we cut loose from Britain; Newburg address and exciting prospect, in these monotonous times, of civil war, while peace commission is sitting in London; just demands of men who have fought, starving and naked, for a bare subsistence after the army disbands, modest request for arrears of pay,—on which to relieve the necessities of their families turned out to grass for seven years,—pleasantly indorsed by the Congress, which feels safe in indorsing

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anything, and rejected by the States, called upon to foot the bill, as a painful instance of the greed and depravity of human nature—there you are: no money, no credit, no government, no friends,—for Europe is sick of us,—no patriotism; immediate prospects, bankruptcy, civil war, thirteen separate meals for Europe. What do you propose, Hamilton? I look to you as your Islanders flee to a stone house in a hurricane. You are an alien, with no damned state roots to pull up, your courage is unhuman, or un-American, and you are the one man of genius in the country. Madison is heroic to a fault, a roaring Berserker, but we must temper him, we must temper him; and meanwhile we will both defer to the peculiar quality of your mettle."

Madison, who had not a grain of humour, replied gravely, his rich southern brogue seeming to roll his words down from a height: "I have a modest hope in the address I prepared for the citizens of Rhode Island, more in Hamilton's really magnificent letter to the Governor. Nothing can be more forcible—nay, beguiling—than his argument in that letter in favour of a general government independent of state machinery, and his elaborate appeal to that irritating little commonwealth to consent to the levying of the impost by Congress, necessary to the raising of the moneys. I fear I am not a hero, for I confess I tremble. I fear the worst. But at all events I am determined to place on record that I left no stone unturned to save this miserable country."

"You will go down to posterity as a great man, Madison, if you are never given the chance to be one," replied the father of American humour and coinage; "for it is not in words but in acts that we display the faith that is not in us. Well, Hamilton?"

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"I must confess," said Hamilton, "that Congress appears to me, as a newcomer, rooted contentedly to its chairs, and determined to do nothing, happy in the belief that Providence has the matter in hand and but bides the right moment to make the whole world over. But I see no cause to despair, else I should not have come to waste my time. I fear that Rhode Island is too fossilised to listen to us, but I shall urge that we change the principle of the Confederation and vote to make the States contribute to the general treasury in an equal proportion to their means, by a system of general taxation imposed under continental authority. If the poorer States, irrespective of land and numbers, could be relieved, and the wealthier taxed specifically on land and houses, the whole regulated by continental legislation, I think that even Rhode Island might be placated. It may be that this is not agreeable to the spirit of the times, but I shall make the attempt—"

"Considering there is no spirit *in* the times, we might as well expect to inform its skull with genius by means of a lighted candle. You think too well of human nature, my boy; expect nothing, that ye be not disappointed, especially in the matter of revenue."

"I have no exalted opinion of human nature, but if I did not think more hopefully of it than you do, I should yield up that enthusiasm without which I can accomplish nothing. You have every gift, but you will end as a dilettante because your ideal is always in the mud; and it is only now and again that you think it worth while to pick it up and give it a bath."

"Right, right," murmured Morris, good-naturedly. "Would that I had your unquenchable belief in the worth while. Allied to your abilities it will make that new world over and upset the wicked plans of the old. Analyst and

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disbeliever in man's right to his exaggerated opinion of himself, how do you keep enthusiasm abreast with knowledge of human kind? Tell me, Hamilton, how do you do it?"

"I fear 'tis the essence of which I am made. My energies will have outlet or tear me to pieces. When there is work to do, my nostrils quiver like a war-horse's at the first roar and smoke—"

"Your modesty does you infinite honour; the truth is, you have the holy fire of patriotism in an abnormal degree. I have it, but I still am normal. I have made sacrifices and shall make more, but my ego curls its lip. Yours never does. That is the difference between you and most of us. Hundreds of us are doggedly determined to go through to the bitter end, sacrifice money, youth and health; but you alone are happy. That is why we love you and are glad to follow your lead. But, I repeat, how can you labour with such undying enthusiasm for the good of human kind when you know what they amount to?"

"Some are worth working for, that is one point; I don't share your opinion of general abasement, for the facts warrant no such opinion. And the battle of ideas, the fight for certain stirring and race-making principles,—that is the greatest game that mortals can play. And to play it, we must have mortals for puppets. To create a new government, a new race, to found what may become the greatest nation on the earth,—what more stupendous destiny? Even if one were forgotten, it would be worth doing, so tremendous would be the exercise of the faculties, so colossal the difficulties. I would have a few men do it all; I have no faith in the uneducated. The little brain, half opened by a village schoolmaster, is pestilential; but in the few with sufficient power over the many,—from

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whom will be evolved more and more to rank with the first few,—in those I have faith, and am proud to work with them."

"Good. I'd not have a monarchy, but I'd have the next thing to it, with a muzzle on the rabble. Perhaps I, too, have faith in a few,—in yourself and George Washington; and in Madison, our own Gibraltar. But the pig-headed, selfish, swinish—well, go on with your present plans. 'Tis to hear those we met to-night, not to analyse each other. Tell us all, that we may not only hope, but work with you."

"The army first. If retirement on half pay is impossible, then full pay for, say six years,—and the arrears,—paid upon the disbanding of the army. Washington, by the exercise of the greatest moral force, but one, that has appeared in this world, has averted a civil war—I am persuaded that horror is averted, and I assume that the country does not care eternally to disgrace itself by letting its deliverers, who have suffered all that an army can suffer, return to their ruined homes without the few dollars necessary for another start in life. I have resigned my claim to arrears of pay, that my argument may not be weakened. Then a peace establishment. Fancy leaving our frontiers to the mercy of state militia! I shall urge that the general government have exclusive power over the sword, to establish certain corps of infantry, artillery, cavalry, dragoons, and engineers, a general system of land fortifications, establishment of arsenals and magazines, erection of foundries and manufactories for arms, of ports and maritime fortifications—with many details with which I will not bore you. I shall urge the necessity of strengthening the Federal government through the influence of officers deriving their appointment directly from

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Congress—always, the necessity of strengthening the central government, of centralising power, and of putting the States where they belong. It is federation or anarchy. Then—moderate funds permanently pledged for the security of lenders. I have preached that since I have dared to preach at all, and that is the only solution of our present distress, for we'll never get another foreign loan—"

"We've accepted your wisdom, but we can't apply it," interposed Morris. "Our only hope lies in your national government—but go on."

"A moment," said Madison. "This, in regard to the peace establishment: Do we apply a war congress to a state of peace, I fear we shall too clearly define its limits. The States may refuse obedience, and then the poor invalided body will fall into greater disrepute than ever."

"I have thought of that," replied Hamilton, "and if the worst comes to the worst, I have a radical plan to propose,—that Congress publish frankly its imperfections to the country—imperfections which make it impossible to conduct the public affairs with honour to itself or advantage to the United States; that it ask the States to appoint a convention, with full powers to revise the Confederation, and to adopt and propose all necessary alterations—all to be approved or rejected, in the last instance, by the legislatures of the several States. That would be the first step toward a national government. With that, all things would be possible,—the payment of our foreign loan, of our army, duties on foreign goods, which is a source of revenue to which they are incredibly blind; the establishment of a firm government, under which all will prosper that are willing to work, of a National Bank, of a peace army—"

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"Of Utopia!" exclaimed Morris. "Hamilton, you are the least visionary man in this country, but you are God knows how many years ahead of your times. If we are ever on two legs again, you will put us there; but your golden locks will thin in the process, and that rosy boyish face we love will be lined with the seams of the true statesman. Only you could contemplate imbuing these fossilised and commonplace intellects, composing our Congress of the Confederation—mark the ring of it!—with a belief in its own impotency and worthlessness. You are not mortal. I always said it. When Duane gave me your letter to read, I remarked: 'He withdrew to heaven, and wrote that letter on the knee of the Almighty; never on earth could he have found the courage and the optimism. No, Hamilton, I would embrace you, did my wooden leg permit me to escape your wrath, but I can give you no encouragement. You will fail here—gloriously, but you will fail. Mark my words, the army will go home cursing, and scratch the ground to feed its women. The States will have no peace establishment to threaten their sovereign rights, we will pay nobody, and become more and more poverty-stricken and contemptible in our own eyes, and in the eyes of Europe; we will do nothing that is wise and everything that is foolish—'

"And then, when the country is sick unto death," interrupted Hamilton, "it will awake to the wisdom of the drastic remedy and cohere into a nation."

"Query," said Madison, "would it not be patriotic to push things from bad to worse as quickly as possible? It might be a case of justifiable Jesuitism."

"And it might lead to anarchy and the jaws of Europe," said Hamilton. "It is never safe to go beyond a certain point in the management of human affairs. What

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turn the passions of the people may take can never be foretold, nor that element of the unknown, which is always under the invisible cap and close on one's heels. God knows I have not much patience in my nature, and I do not believe that most of my schemes are so far in advance of even this country's development; but certain lessons must be instilled by slow persistence. I have no faith in rushing people at the point of the bayonet in times of peace."

"I think you are right there," said Morris. "But mark my words, you'll propagate ideas here, and the result in time will be the birth of a nation—no doubt of that; but you must rest content to live on hope for the present. I was a fettered limb in this body too long. I know its inertia."

He knew whereof he spoke. Hamilton won little but additional reputation, much admiration, half resentful, and many enemies. The army went home unpaid; the peace establishment consisted of eighty men; little or nothing was done to relieve the national debt or to carry on the business of government. Even his proposition to admit the public to the galleries of Congress, in the hope of interesting it in governmental affairs, only drew upon him the sneer that he could go out on the balcony and make his speeches if he feared his eloquence was wasted. He was accused of writing the Newburg address inciting the officers to civil war, because it was particularly well written, and of hurrying Congress to Trenton, when threatened by a mutinous regiment. But he worked on undaunted, leaving his indelible mark; for he taught the States that their future prosperity and happiness lay in giving up to the Union some part of the imposts that might be levied on foreign commodities, and incidentally the idea of a

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double government; he proposed a definite system of funding the debts on continental securities, which gradually rooted in the commonsense of the American people, and he inveighed with a bitter incisiveness, which was tempered by neither humour nor gaiety, against the traitorous faction in the pay of France. He dissuaded Robert Morris from resigning, and introduced a resolution in eulogy of Washington's management of his officers in the most critical hour of the Union's history. But his immediate accomplishment was small and discouraging, although his foresight may have anticipated what George Ticknor Curtis wrote many years later:—

The ideas of a statesman like Hamilton, earnestly bent on the discovery and inculcation of truth, do not pass away. Wiser than those by whom he was surrounded, with a deeper knowledge of the science of government than most of them, and constantly enunciating principles which extended far beyond the temporising policy of the hour, the smiles of his opponents only prove to posterity how far he was in advance of them.

The following extract from a letter of James M'Henry, Lafayette's former aide, and a member of the Congress, is interesting as a commentary on the difficulties of our hero's position while a member of that body.

DEAR HAMILTON: The homilies you delivered in Congress are still remembered with pleasure. The impressions they made are in favour of your integrity; and no one but believes you a man of honour and of republican principles. Were you ten years older and twenty thousand pounds richer, there is no doubt but that you might obtain the suffrages of Congress for the highest office in their gift. You are supposed to possess various knowledge, useful, substantial, and ornamental. Your very grave and your cautious, your men who measure others by the standard of their own creeping politics, think you sometimes intemperate, but seldom visionary: and that were you to pursue your object with as much cold perseverance as you do with

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ardour and argument, you would become irresistible. In a word, if you could submit to spend a whole life in dissecting a fly you would be, in their opinion, one of the greatest men in the world. Bold designs; measures calculated for their rapid execution; a wisdom that would convince from its own weight; a project that would surprise the people into greater happiness, without giving them an opportunity to view it and reject it, are not adapted to a council composed of discordant elements, or a people who have thirteen heads, each of which pay superstitious adorations to inferior divinities.

Adieu, my dear friend, and in the days of your happiness drop a line to your M'HENRY.

At the end of 1783 Hamilton was convinced that he was of no further immediate use to the country, and refused a reëlection to the Congress, despite entreaty and expostulation, returning to the happiness of his domestic life and to his neglected law-books. The British having evacuated New York, he moved his family there and entered immediately upon the practice of his profession.

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BOOK IV.

"ALEXANDER THE GREAT."

INCLUDING THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES.

I.

It was the autumn of 1786. New York had risen from her charred and battered ruins. There were cows on her meadows, a lake with wooded shores as merely traditional, groves, gardens, orchards, fields, and swamps; but her business houses and public buildings were ambitious once more, her spires more lofty and enduring, her new dwelling-houses, whether somewhat crowded in Wall Street and Broadway, or on the terraces of less busy streets, or along the river fronts and facing a wild and lovely prospect, were square, substantial, and usually very large. And every street was an avenue of ancient trees. Mrs. John Jay, with her experience of foreign courts, her great beauty, and the prestige of her distinguished husband, was the leader of society, holding weekly receptions, and the first to receive the many distinguished strangers. Although society was not quite as gay as it became three years later, under a more settled government and hopeful outlook, still there was quiet entertaining by the Hamiltons, who lived at 58 Wall Street, the Duers, Watts,

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Livingstons, Clintons, Duanes, Jays, Roosevelts, Van Cortlandts, and other representatives of old New York families, now returned to their own. Congress was come to New York and established in the City Hall in Wall Street. It had given the final impetus to the city, struggling under the burden of ruins and debt left by the British; and society sauntered forth every afternoon in all the glory of velvet and ruffles, three-cornered hats recklessly laced, brocades, hoop-skirts, and Rohan hats, to promenade past the building where the moribund body was holding its last sessions. The drive was down the Broadway into the shades of the Battery, with the magnificent prospect of bay and wooded shores beyond. Politics, always epidemic among men and women alike, had recently been animated by Hamilton's coup at Annapolis, and the prospect of a general convention of the States to consider the reorganisation of a government which had reduced the Confederation to a condition fearfully close to anarchy, the country to ruin, and brought upon the thirteen sovereign independent impotent and warring States the contempt of Europe and the threat of its greed.

A group of men, standing on a corner of Wall Street and the Broadway, were laughing heartily: a watch was dragging off to jail two citizens who had fallen upon each other with the venom of political antithesis; the one, a Nationalist, having called Heaven to witness that Hamilton was a demi-god, begotten to save the wretched country, the other vociferating that Hamilton was the devil who would trick the country into a monarchy, create a vast standing army, which would proclaim him king and stand upon the heads of a people that had fought and died for freedom, while the tyrant exercised his abominable functions.

The men in the group were Governor Clinton, Hamil-

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ton's bitterest opponent, but sufficiently amused at the incident; William Livingston, Governor of New Jersey, now with but a few hairs on the top of his head and a few at the base, his nose more penetrating, his eye more disapproving, than ever; James Duane, Major of New York; John Jay, the most faultless character in the Confederation, honoured and unloved, his cold eyes ever burning with an exalted fire; and John Marshall of Virginia, munching an apple, his attire in shabby contrast to the fashionable New Yorkers, the black mane on his splendid head unpowdered and tossing in the ocean breeze.

"I like your Hamilton," he announced, "and I've come to the conclusion that I think with him on all matters. He's done more to educate the people up to a rational form of government during the last seven years than all the rest of us put together. He's shone upon them like a fixed star. Other comets have come and gone, whirling them forward to destruction, but they have always been forced to turn and look at him again and again, and he has always shone in the same place."

"Sir," exclaimed Clinton, who was flushed with rage, "are you aware that I am present, and that I entirely disapprove of Mr. Hamilton's attempt to reduce the States to a condition of ignominious subserviency to an ambitious and tyrannical central power?"

"I had heard of you, sir," replied Marshall, meekly, "and I am glad to have the opportunity to ask you what *your* remedy is for the existing state of things? You will admit that there must be a remedy, and quickly. If not a common government with a Constitution empowering it to regulate trade, imposts, reduce the debt, enter into treaties with foreign powers which will not be sneered at, administer upon a thousand details which I will not

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enumerate, and raise the country from its slough of contempt, then what? As the personage who has taken the most decided stand against the enlightened and patriotic efforts of Mr. Hamilton, I appeal to you for a counter suggestion as magnificent as his. I am prepared, sir, to listen with all humility."

Clinton, whose selfish fear of his own downfall with that of State supremacy was so well known that a smile wrinkled across the polite group of gentlemen surrounding him, deepened his colour to purple under this assault, and stammered: "Sir, have I not myself proposed an enlargement of the powers of Congress, in order to counteract the damnable policy of Britain? Did not your Hamilton harangue that crowd I sanctioned till he got nearly all he asked for?"

"But he knew better than to ask for too much, in the conditions," replied Marshall, suavely. "May I suggest that you have not answered my humble and earnest questions?"

"I answer no questions that I hold to be impertinent and unimportant!" said Clinton, pompously, and with a dignified attempt to recover his poise. He swept his hat from his head; the New Yorkers were as punctilious; Marshall lifted his battered lid from the wild mass beneath, and the popular Governor sauntered down the street, saluted deferentially by Nationalists and followers alike. When he had occasion to sweep his gorgeous hat to his knees, the ladies courtesied to the ground, their draperies taking up the entire pavement, and His Excellency was obliged to encounter the carriages in the street.

"If Clinton were sure of figuring as powerfully in a national government as he does in the state of New York, he would withdraw his opposition," said Livingston, con-

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temptuously. "He has been Governor for nine years. New York is his throne. He is a king among the common people, who will elect him indefinitely. Were it not for Hamilton, he would be New York, and the awful possibilities lying hidden in the kernel of change haunt his dreams at night. You embarrassed him in a manner that rejoiced my heart, Mr. Marshall. I beg you will do me the honour to dine with me to-night. I beg to assure you that your fame is as known to me as were I a Virginian."

"I'll accept the invitation with pleasure," replied Marshall, whose manners were all that his attire was not. "I shall be glad to talk with you on many subjects. To-morrow I shall pay my respects to Mr. Hamilton. His has been a trying but not a thankless task. He has addressed himself to the right class of men all over the country, winning them to his sound and enlightened views, giving them courage, consolidating them against the self-interested advocates of State sovereignty. That he has so often neglected a legal practice which must bring him a large income, as well as sufficient personal glory, out of a sincere pity for and patriotic interest in this afflicted country, gives New York deep cause for congratulation that she was in such close communication with that Island of his youth. I wish that fate had steered him to Virginia."

"Surely you have enough as it is," said Duane, laughing: "Washington, yourself, Patrick Henry, Jefferson, Madison, Randolph. Spare us Hamilton. We shall need him badly enough. The Clinton faction is very strong. That the Hamilton embraces the best spirits of the community means that it is in the minority, and needs the

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unremitting exercise of his genius to counteract the disadvantage in numbers."

"I think that what I admire most in Hamilton," remarked a newcomer, a small dark man of vivid personality, "are his methods of manipulation. He picks out his own men, Duer, Troup, Malcolm, has them sent to the legislature, where they blindly and indefatigably obey his behest and gain the consent of that body to the convention at Annapolis, then see that he is elected as principal delegate. He goes to Annapolis ostensibly to attend a commercial convention: while its insufficient numbers are drowsing, he springs upon them an eloquent proposal for a national convention for reforming the Union, and forces it through before they know what they are about. Certainly Mr. Hamilton is a man of genius."

"Do I understand, Mr. Burr," said Jay, from his glacial height, "that you are impugning the purity of Mr. Hamilton's motives?"

"No, sir," replied Burr, whom an archangel could not have rebuked. "In the present condition of things all methods are justifiable. Hamilton is great but adaptable. I respect him for that quality above all others, for he is quite the most imperious character in America, and his natural instinct is to come out and say, 'You idiots, fall into line behind me and stop twaddling. I will do your thinking; be kind enough not to delay me further.' On the other hand, he is forced to be diplomatic, to persuade where he would command, to move slowly instead of charging at the point of the bayonet. So, although I have no sympathy with his pronounced monarchical inclinations, I respect his acquired methods of getting what he wants."

"What do you mean by pronounced monarchical in-

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clinations?" snorted Governor Livingston, who could not endure Burr.

Burr gave his peculiar sardonic laugh. "Will you deny it, sir?"

"Deny it? I certainly am in Mr. Hamilton's confidence to no such extent, and I challenge you to indicate one sentence in his published writings which points to such a conclusion."

"Ah, he is too clever for that; but his very walk, his whole personality expresses it, to say nothing of the fact that he never thinks of denying his admiration of the British Constitution. And did he not defend the Tories after the evacuation, when no other lawyer would touch them? I admired his courage, but it was sufficient evidence of the catholicity of his sentiments."

"Mr. Hamilton defended the abstract principle of right against wrong in defending the wretched Tories against the persecutions of an unmagnanimous public sentiment," said Jay, witheringly. "I should advise you, young gentleman, to become a disciple of Mr. Hamilton. I can recommend no course which would prove so beneficial." And he turned on his heel.

He had hit Burr. The jealousy born in Albany had thriven with much sustenance since. Hamilton was by far the most prominent figure at the New York bar, and was hastening to its leadership. Burr was conspicuous for legal ability, but never would be first while Hamilton was in the race. Moreover, although Hamilton had not then reached that dizzy height from which a few years later he looked down upon a gaping world, he was the leader of a growing and important party, intelligently followed and worshipped by the most eminent men in the

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Confederation, many of them old enough to be his father; and he was the theme of every drawing-room, of every coffee-house group and conclave. His constant pamphlets on the subject nearest to all men's hearts, his eloquent speeches on the same theme upon every possible occasion, and the extraordinary brilliance of his legal victories, gave people no time to think of other men. When he entered a drawing-room general conversation ceased, and the company revolved about him so long as he remained. When he spoke, all the world went to hear. For an ambitious young man to be told to attach himself to the train of this conquering hero was more than poor Burr could stand, and he replied angrily:—

"I have the privilege of being true to my own convictions, I suppose. They are not Mr. Hamilton's and never will be. I do not impugn the purity of his motives, but I have no desire to see George Washington king, nor Hamilton, neither. I wish you good day, sirs," and he strode up Broadway to the Fields with dignity in every inch of him.

"This constant talk of Hamilton's monarchical principles makes my gorge rise," said Livingston. "Did he not fight as hard as he was permitted, to drive monarchy out of the country? Was he not the first to sound the call to arms?"

"Hamilton's exact attitude on that question is not clearly understood," replied Duane, soothingly, for the heat of Livingston's republicanism had never abated. "I fancy it is something like this: So far no constitution has worked so well as the British. Montesquieu knew whereof he praised. The number of men in this country equal to the great problem of self-government are in a pitiful

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minority. The anarchic conditions of the States, the disgrace which they have brought upon us, their inefficiency to cope with any problem, the contemptible depths of human nature which they have revealed to the thinking members of the community — all these causes inspire Hamilton, incomparably the greatest brain in the country, with a dread of leaving any power whatever in their hands. He believes firmly in the few of tried brain and patriotism. I very much doubt if he has considered the subject of actual monarchy for a moment, for he is no dreamer, and he knows that even his followers have been Republicans too long. But that he will fight for the strongest sort of national government, with the least possible power vested in the States—oh, no doubt of that."

"Our people are hopeless, I fear," said Livingston, with a sigh. "This period of independency seems to have demoralised them when it should have brought out their best elements. Well, Mr. Marshall, what say you? You have been modestly silent, and we have been rudely voluble when so distinguished a guest should have had all the floor."

"I have been deeply entertained," replied Marshall, with a grin. "My visit to New York is by no means wasted. I envy Mr. Hamilton; but let him look out for Mr. Burr. There are just five feet seven inches of jealous hate in that well-balanced exterior, and its methods would be sinuous, I fancy, but no less deadly. But Hamilton has had many escapes. What was that atrocious story I heard of a duelling cabal? When the rolling stone of gossip reaches Virginia from New York, it has gathered more moss than you would think."

"It would be difficult to exaggerate that story," snorted

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Livingston. "Hamilton defended his course in regard to the Tories in two pamphlets, signed 'Phocion.' They were answered by a Mr. Ledyard, who signed himself 'Mentor,' and was a conspicuous advocate of the damnable spirit of revenge possessing this country. It is a bold man indeed who enters into a conflict of the pen with Hamilton, and 'Mentor' was left without a leg to stand on. Forthwith, a club of Ledyard's friends and sympathisers, enraged by defeat, and fearing the growing ascendency of Hamilton over men's minds, deliberately agreed to challenge him in turn until he was silenced forever. This atrocious project would undoubtedly have been carried out, had not Ledyard himself repudiated it with horror. Can you show me a greater instance of the depravity of human nature, sir?"

"We are in a ferment of bitter passions," said Marshall, sadly, "and I fear they will be worse before they are better. I only hope that Hamilton will not be swept into their current, for upon his keeping his balance depends the future greatness of this country. I am at your service, sir, for I will confess my two legs are tired."

II.

As the three men turned into Broadway they saluted a man who was entering Wall Street. It was Hamilton, hastening home to his family after the day's work. He had lost his boyish slenderness; his figure had broadened and filled out sufficiently to add to his presence while

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destroying nothing of its symmetry or agile grace, and it was dressed with the same care. His face was as gay and animated as ever, responded with the old mobility to every passing thought, but its lines and contours showed the hard work and severe thought of the last four years. When he was taking a brief holiday with his friends, or tumbling about the floor with his little brood, he felt as much a boy as ever, but no one appreciated more fully than he the terrible responsibility of his position in the Confederation. His abilities, combined with his patriotism, had forced him to the head of the Nationalist Party, for whose existence he was in greatest measure responsible; and he hardly dared to think of his personal ambitions, nor could he hesitate to neglect his lucrative practice whenever the crying needs of the country demanded it. He had also given much time to the creating and organisation of the Bank of New York. But Burr was not far wrong when he accused him of impatience. His bearing was more imperious, his eye flashed more intolerantly, than ever. To impute to him monarchical ambitions was but the fling of a smarting jealousy, but it is quite true that he felt he knew what was best for the country, and would have liked to regulate its affairs without further hindrance.

His house, beyond the dip of Wall Street and within sight of the bay, was of red brick, and as unbeautiful architecturally as other New York houses which had risen at random from the ruins. But within, it was very charming. The long drawing-room was furnished with mahogany, and rose-coloured brocade, with spindle-legged tables and many bibelots sent by Angelica Church, now living in London. The library was filling with valuable books, and

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the panelled whiteness of the dining-room glittered with silver and glass, which in quantity or value was not exceeded in the home of any young couple in America; the world had outdone itself at the most interesting wedding of the Revolution. Betsey's sitting-room was behind the drawing-room, and there Hamilton found her counting the moments until his return. She had lost nothing of her slimness, and except on dress occasions wore her mass of soft black hair twisted in a loose knot and unpowdered. She looked younger and prettier than with powder or wig, and Hamilton begged her to defy the fashion; but yielding in all else, on this point she was inflexible. "I am wiser than you in just a few things," she would say, playfully, for she firmly believed him infallible; "my position would suffer, were I thought eccentric. You cannot stand in rank without a uniform. I shall not yield to Sarah Jay nor even Kitty Duer. I am a little Republican, sir, and know my rights. And I know how to keep them."

To-day, after her usual prolonged and unmitigated greeting, she remarked: "Speaking of eccentric people, I met to-day, at Lady Sterling's, that curious person, Mrs. Croix, or Miss Capet, as some will call her. Her hair was built up quite a foot and unpowdered. On top of it was an immense black hat with plumes, and her velvet gown was at least three yards on the floor. She certainly is the handsomest creature in town, but, considering all the gossip, I think it odd Lady Sterling should take her up, and I believe that Kitty is quite annoyed. But Lady Sterling is so good-natured, and I am told that Dr. Franklin went personally and asked her to give this lady countenance. He calls her his Fairy Queen, and to-day saluted her on the lips before all of us. Poor dear Dr.

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Franklin is by now quite in the class with Cæsar's wife, but still I think his conduct rather remarkable."

"Who is this woman?" asked Hamilton, indifferently.

"Well!" exclaimed his wife, with a certain satisfaction, "you *are busy*. She has been the talk of the town for quite three months, although she never went *anywhere* before to-day."

"I hear all my gossip from you," said Hamilton, smiling from the hearth-rug, "and considering the labours of the past three months—but tell me about her. I believe I love you best when gossiping. Your effort to be caustic is the sweetest thing in the world."

She threw a ball of wool at him, which he caught and pulled apart, then showered on her head. It was yellow wool, and vastly becoming on her black hair. "You must have a yellow hat at once, with plumes," he said, "but go on."

"You shall wind that this evening, sir. Well, she came here about three months ago with Captain Croix of the British army, and rumour hath it that he left a wife in England, and that this lady's right to the royal name of Capet is still unchallenged. The story goes that she was born about eighteen years ago, on a French frigate bound for the West Indies, that her mother died, and that, there being no one else of that royal name on board, the Captain adopted her; but that a baby and a ship being more than he could manage, he presented the baby to a humble friend at Newport, by the name of Thompson, who brought her up virtuously, but without eradicating the spirit of the age, and one fine day she disappeared with Colonel Croix, and after a honeymoon which may have been spent in the neighbourhood of any church be-

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tween here and Rhode Island, or of none, they arrived in New York, and took the finest lodgings in town. I suppose Dr. Franklin was a friend of her humble guardian, he is so philanthropic, and that he is willing to take my lady's word that all is well—and perhaps it is. I feel myself quite vicious in repeating the vaguest sort of gossip —active, though. Who knows, if she had worn a wig, or an inch of powder, and employed the accepted architect for her tower, she would have passed without question? Another pillar for my argument, sir."

"As it is, you are even willing to believe that she is a daughter of the house of France," said Hamilton, with a hearty laugh. "Would that the world were as easily persuaded of what is good for it as of what tickles its pettiness. Shall you ask this daughter of the Capets to the house?"

"I have not made up my mind," said Mrs. Hamilton, demurely.

The two older children, Philip and Angelica, came tumbling into the room, and Hamilton romped with them for a half-hour, then flung them upon their mother, and watched them from the hearth-rug. Betsey was lovely with her children, who were beautiful little creatures, and Hamilton was always arranging them in groups. The boy and girl pulled down her hair with the yellow wool, until all her diminutive figure and all her face, but its roguish black eyes, were extinguished; and Hamilton forgot the country.

Elizabeth Schuyler was a cleverer woman than her meed of credit has led the world to believe. She understood Hamilton very well even then, although, as his faults but added to his fascination in the eyes of those that

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loved him, the knowledge did not detract from her happiness. In many ways she made herself necessary to him; at that time she even kept his papers in order. He talked to her freely on every subject that interested him, from human nature to finance, taxes, and the law, and she never permitted a yawn to threaten. He read aloud to her every line he wrote, and while she would not have presumed to suggest, her sympathy was one of his imperative needs. When his erratic fancy flashed him into seductive meshes, she pulled a string and back he came. Perhaps this is the reason why no specific account of his numerous alleged amours have come down to us. He is vaguely accused of being the Lothario of his time, irresistible and indefatigable; but of all famous men whose names are enlivened with anecdotes of gallantry in the vast bulk of the world's unwritten history, he alone is the hero of much mysterious affirmation but of no particular romance. The Reynolds affair is open history and not a case in point. It is probable that, owing to inherent fickleness and Betsey's gentle manipulation, his affairs rarely lasted long enough to attract attention. It is one of the accidents of life that the world barely knew of his acquaintance with Eliza Croix, she who has come down to us as Madame Jumel; and such a thing could not happen twice. But whether or not he possessed in all their perfection the proclivities of so great and impetuous and passionate a genius, it is certain that he loved his wife devotedly, and above all other women, so long as his being held together. His home was always his Mecca, and he left it only when public duty compelled his presence in exile.

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III.

In February he went to the Assembly to fight Clinton's opposition to the harassing need of conferring a permanent revenue upon Congress. He had already written a memorial, distributed over the State, setting forth the dangerous position of the country. But Clinton was lord of the masses, and their representatives in the Legislature had been trained to think as he thought. They honoured him because he had made New York the greatest State in the Union, not yet realising that he had brought her into disrepute at home and abroad, and that his selfish policy was now hastening her to her ruin. To increase the power of Congress was to encourage the spirit of Nationalism, and that meant the sure decline of the States and of himself. The fight was hot and bitter. Clinton won; but the thinking men present took Hamilton's words home and pondered upon them, and in time they bore fruit.

After many delays the Convention was summoned to meet at Philadelphia on the 14th of May. History calls it the Constitutional Convention, but its promoters were careful to give the States-right people no such guide to contravention. The violent oppositionists of all change slumbered peacefully, while the representatives of the more enlightened were appointed to the Convention under moderately worded and somewhat vague resolutions; and some of them went as vaguely. Congress, after a characteristic and selfish hesitation, and a thorough fright induced by the Massachusetts rebellion, was finally per-

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suaded to give her official sanction to the proposed Convention. Hamilton secured his appointment as a delegate, —after a hard fight to have New York represented at all, —and found himself saddled with two Clintonians, Robert Yates and John Lansing, Jr. But the first great step for which he had struggled, since his Morristown letter to the Financier of the Revolution seven years before, was assured at last.

Shortly before the Convention opened, Gouverneur Morris and James Madison, Jr. met by appointment at Hamilton's house to discuss the plan of campaign and make sure of their leader's wishes. General Schuyler and Robert Troup were also present.

Morris was a delegate from Pennsylvania, but was about to return to New York, having bought the family estate at Morrisania from his brother, Staats Long Morris, and was involved in business enterprises which resulted in a large fortune. He awaited the settlement of the country's affairs before sailing for Europe in his private interests. Troup, now a successful lawyer at the New York bar, was an able politician and devoted to Hamilton's interests. Philip Schuyler was entirely in his son-in-law's confidence, working for and with him always, occupying the double position of adviser and follower. Madison, who had forced the Convention at Annapolis, had had his breath taken away by Hamilton's coup, but now was delighted that he had been the instrument which made it possible. He had composed his somewhat halting mind to the determination to concentrate his energies upon wringing from the Convention a national scheme of government after Hamilton's model, provided that model were not too extreme: he was no monarchist, and knew the people very thoroughly.

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But he was deeply anxious to have Hamilton's views and plans for his guidance, even if modification were necessary. He knew Hamilton's complete mastery of the science of government, and that his broad structure was bound to be right, no matter what its frills.

The company assembled in the library, whose open windows overhung a garden full of lilacs, dogwood, and maples. There was a long table in the room, about which the guests mechanically seated themselves, so accustomed were they to the council table. Hamilton had greeted them in the hall, and sent them on to the library, while he went to fetch some papers his wife had promised to copy for him.

"So this is the room in which the government of the United States is to be born," said Troup, glancing about at the familiar books and at the desk stuffed with papers. "I shall always smell lilacs in the new Constitution."

"If we get one," observed Morris. "'Conceive' would be a better word than 'born.' Twelve states,—for my part I am glad the refusal of Rhode Island to send delegates makes one less,—each wanting its own way, and the North inevitably pitted against the South: I confess that 'still-born' strikes me as a better word than any."

"We'll have a Constitution," said Madison, doggedly, "I've made up my mind to that. There are a sufficient number of able and public-spirited men on their way to Philadelphia to agree upon a wise scheme of government and force it through—besides Hamilton and ourselves there are Washington, Governor Randolph, William Livingston, Rufus King, Roger Sherman, Dr. Franklin, James Wilson, George Wythe, the Pinckneys, Hugh Williamson—to mention but a few."

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"They are not a bad lot," admitted Morris, "if they had all seen more of the world and less of their native or adopted State—all this State patriotism makes me sick. Half were not born in the State they vociferate about, are not certain of ending their days in it, nor of which their children may adopt as intemperately."

"Travel is not the only cure for provincialism," said General Schuyler. "Dr. Franklin, I happen to know, is bent upon a form of government little firmer than the one now existing; and Hamilton, whose travels are limited to campaigning in the different States, has a comprehensive grasp of European political machinery, and the breadth of vision such knowledge involves, which could gain nothing by personal contact."

"Dr. Franklin was too long a mendicant at foreign courts not to be besottedly in love with their antithesis, and Hamilton has a brain power and an intellectual grasp which quite remove him from the odiums of comparison," said Morris. "I think myself he is fortunate in never having visited Europe, deeply as he may regret it; for with his faculty of divination he goes straight for what is best only—or most essential. Had he lived there, the details and disappointments might have blocked his vision and upset the fine balance of his mind. There she is!"

He was at the window as quickly as he could have flung a book to the lilacs, despite his wooden leg; and he was followed by Troup and General Schuyler, demanding, "Who?"

"Mrs. Croix—there. Did anything so lovely ever dawn upon a distracted American's vision? 'Tis said she is an unregistered daughter of the house of Capet, and I vow she looks every inch a princess. I stared at her so

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long last night in Vauxhall that she was embarrassed; and I never saw such poise, such royal command of homage. How has she developed it at the age of eighteen? I half believe this tale of royal birth; although there are those who assert that she is nothing less than the daughter of our highest in honour."

"'Tis said that she had an opportunity to acquire her aplomb in the village of Rutland, Massachusetts, where for some years she enlivened the exile and soothed the domestic yearnings of many British officers," said Troup. "One told me that he would vow she was none other than the famous vagrant 'Betsey.'"

"But I am told that she comes of a respectable Rhode Island family named Bowen," observed General Schuyler, who was not romantic. "That she was wayward and ran off with Colonel Croix, of whose other wife there is no proof, but that none of these fancy stories are true."

"Then wherein lies her claim to the name of Capet?" demanded Morris. "'Twould be nothing remarkable were she a daughter of Louis V., and I'm told she signs her name Eliza Capet Croix."

"I don't know," said Schuyler, meekly. "'Tis easy enough to assume a name, if you have it not. I am told that Lady Sterling is assured of her respectability. She certainly shines upon us like a star at this moment. I did not know that women had such hair."

"Is this what we came here to discuss?" asked a voice, dropped to the register of profound contempt. They turned about with a laugh and faced Madison's ascetic countenance, pale with disgust. "We have the most important work to do for which men ever met together, and

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we stand at the window and talk scandal about a silly woman and her hair."

"You did not, my dear James," said Morris, lightly; "and thereby you have missed the truly divine stimulus for the day's work. Don't you realise, my friend, that no matter how hard a man may labour, some woman is always in the background of his mind? She is the one reward of virtue."

"I know nothing of the sort," replied Madison, contemptuously. "I can flatter myself that I at least am independent of what appears to men like you to be the only motive for living."

"Right, my boy, but great as you are, you don't know what you might have been."

The door opened, and Hamilton entered the room, his hands full of papers, his face as gay and eager as if he were about to read to his audience a poem or a lively tale. Perhaps one secret of his ascendency over those who knew him best was that he never appeared to take himself seriously, even when his whole being radiated power and imperious determination. When he descended to the depths of seriousness and his individuality was most overwhelming, his unsleeping sense of humour saved him from a hint of the demagogue.

"While my wife was finishing, I heard you gossiping from the window above," he said, "but I had by far the best view. The lilac bushes—"

"Do you know her?" asked Morris, eagerly.

"Alas, I do not. It is incalculable months since I have had time to look so long at a woman. What is the matter, Madison?"

"I am nauseated. I had thought that *you*—"

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Here even General Schuyler laughed, and Hamilton hurriedly arranged his papers.

He sat down when he began to talk, but was quickly on his feet and shaking his papers over the table. To him, also, the council table was the most familiar article of furniture in his world, but he was usually addressing those it stood for, and he was too ardent a speaker, even when without the incentive of debate, to keep to his chair.

"I know what you are wondering," he said. "No, it is not the British Constitution. What I have done so distempered as to impress people with the belief that I am blind to the spirit of this country, I am at a loss to conjecture. The British Constitution is the best form which the world has yet produced; in the words of Necker, it is the only government 'which unites public strength with individual security.' Nevertheless, no one is more fully convinced than I that none but a republican government can be attempted in this country, or would be adapted to our situation. Therefore, I propose to look to the British Consitution for nothing but those elements of stability and permanency which a republican system requires, and which may be incorporated into it without changing its characteristic principles. There never has been, and there never will be, anything in my acts or principles inconsistent with the spirit of republican liberty. Whatever my private predilections, it would be impossible for me, understanding the people of this country as I do, to fail to recognise the authority of that people as the source of all political power. Therefore you will find many departures from the British Constitution in the rough draft I am about to read. I have neither the patience nor the temper to dogmatise upon abstract theories of liberty, and our success will

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lie in adapting to our particular needs such principles of government as have been tried and not found wanting, our failure in visionary experiments. The best and wisest effort we can make will be a sufficient experiment, for whose result we must all tremble.

"It is going to be difficult to persuade this Convention to unite upon any constitution very much stronger than the one Dr. Franklin will propose, or to accomplish its ratification afterward. Nevertheless, I have prepared a draft of the strongest constitution short of monarchy which it is possible to conceive, and which I shall propose to the Convention for reasons I will explain after I have read it to you. Do you care to listen?"

"Hurry up!" exclaimed Morris. The audience leaned forward. Madison shook his head all through the reading; Morris jerked his with emphatic approval.

The radical points in which Hamilton's constitution differed from that under which we live, was in the demand for a President, to be elected by property holders, and who should hold office during good behaviour; senators possessing certain property qualifications and elected on the same principle; and governors of States appointed and removable by the President. Practically the author of the dual government, he believed emphatically in subserving the lesser to the greater, although endowing the States with sufficient power for self-protection. The Executive was to be held personally responsible for official misconduct, both he and the senators subject to impeachment and to removal from office. The whole scheme was wrought out with the mathematical complexity and precision characteristic of Hamilton's mind.

"Would that it were possible," exclaimed Morris, when

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Hamilton had finished. "But as well expect the Almighty to drive the quill. You will weaken your influence, Hamilton, and to no effect."

"Ah, but I have calculated upon two distinct points, and I believe I shall achieve them. I have not the most distant hope that this paper will be acceptable to five men in the Convention,—three, perhaps, would round the number,—Washington, yourself, myself. Nevertheless, I shall introduce it and speak in its favour with all the passion of which I am master, for these reasons: I believe in it; its energy is bound to give a tone that might be lacking otherwise; and—this is the principal point—*there must be something to work back from.* If I alarm with the mere chance of so perilous a menace to their democratic ideals, they will go to work in earnest at *something* in order to defeat me, and they will not go back so far in the line of vigour as if I had suggested a more moderate plan; for, mark my words, they would infallibly incline to weaker measures than *any* firm government which should first be proposed. In the management of men one of the most important things to bear in mind is their proneness to work forward from the weak, and backward from the strong. On the quality of the strength depends its magnetism over the weak. All reformers are ridiculed or outlawed, and their measures are never wholly successful; but they awaken men's minds to something of approximate worth, and to a desire for a divorce from the old order of things. So, while I expect to be called a monarchist, I hope to instil subtly the idea of the absolute necessity of a strong government, and implant in their minds a distrust of one too weak."

"Good," said Morris. "And it is always a delight to see your revelation of yourself in a new light. I perceive

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that to your other accomplishments you add the cunning of the fox."

"You are right to call it an accomplishment," retorted Hamilton. "We cannot go through life successfully with the bare gifts of the Almighty, generous though He may have been. If I find that I have need of cunning, or brutality,—than which nothing is farther from my nature,—or even nagging, I do not hesitate to borrow and use them."

"Let us call this sagacity," said Troup. "'Tis a prettier word. Or the canniness of the Scot. But there is one thing I fear," he added anxiously. "You may injure your chances of future preferment. Your ambition will be thought too vaulting, particularly for so young a man, and, besides, you may be thought a menace to the commonwealth."

"That is a point to be considered, Hamilton," said General Schuyler.

"I have an end to gain, sir, and I mean to gain it. Moreover, this is no time to be considering private interests. If this be not the day for patriotism to stifle every personal ambition, then there is little hope for human nature. I believe the result of this paper will be a constitution of respectable strength, and I shall use all the influence I wield to make the people accept it. So, if you worry, consider if the later effort will not outweigh the first."

"Hamilton," said Madison, solemnly, "you are a greater man even than I thought you. You have given me a most welcome hint, and I shall take upon myself to engineer the recession from your constitution. I shall study its effect with the closest attention and be guided

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accordingly. I am heart and soul in this matter, and would give my life to it if necessary. I never should have thought of anything so astute," he added, with some envy, "but perhaps if I had, no one else would be so peculiarly fitted as myself to work upon its manifold suggestions. I hope I do not strike you as conceited," he said, looking around anxiously, "but I *feel* that it is in me to render efficient service in the present crisis."

Before Morris could launch his ready fling, Hamilton hastened to assure Madison of his belief that no man living could render services so great. He underrated neither Madison's great abilities nor the danger of rankling arrows in that sensitive and not too courageous spirit. They then discussed a general plan of campaign and the best methods of managing certain members of the Convention. Morris was the first to rise.

"Adieu," he said. "I go to ruminate upon our Captain's diplomacy, and to pursue the ankle of Mrs. Croix. Be sure that the one will not interfere with the other, but will mutually stimulate."

The other gentlemen adjourned to the dining-room.

IV.

THE story of the Convention has been told so often that only the merest outline is necessary here; those who have not before this read at least one of the numberless reports, would be the last to wish its multigenerous details. To the students of history there is nothing new to tell, as may be the case with less exploited incidents of

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Hamilton's career. Someone has said that it was an assemblage of hostile camps, and it certainly was the scene of intense and bitter struggles, of a heterogeneous mass blindly striving to cohere, whilst a thousand sectional interests tugged at the more familiar of the dual ideal; of compromise after compromise; of a fear pervading at least one-half that the liberties of republicanism were menaced by every energetic suggestion; of the soundest judgment and patriotism compelled to truckle to meaner sentiments lest they get nothing; of the picked men of the Confederacy, honourable, loyal, able, and enlightened, animated in the first and last instance by a pure and common desire for the highest welfare of the country, driven to war upon one another by the strength of their conflicting opinions; ending—among the thirty-nine out of the sixty-one delegates who signed the Constitution—in a feeling as closely resembling general satisfaction as individual disappointments would permit.

At first so turbulent were the conditions, that Franklin, who troubled the Almighty but little himself, arose and suggested that the meetings be opened with prayer. After this sarcasm, and the submission of his mild compromise with the Confederation, he sat and watched the painted sun behind Washington's chair, pensively wondering if the artist had intended to convey the idea of a rise or a setting. Hamilton presented his draft at the right moment, and the startled impression it made quite satisfied him, particularly as his long speech to the Committee of the Whole was received with the closest attention. Nothing could alter his personal fascination, and even his bitterest enemies rarely left their chairs while he spoke. The small figure, so full of dignity and magnetising power that it excluded every other object from their

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vision, the massive head with a piercing force in every line of its features, the dark eyes blazing and flashing with a fire that never had been seen in the eyes of a mere mortal before, the graceful rapid gestures, and the passionate eloquence which never in its most apparently abandoned moments failed to be sincere and logical, made him for the hour the glory of friend and enemy alike, although the reaction was correspondingly bitter. Upon this occasion he spoke for six hours without the interruption of a scraping heel; and what the Convention did not know about the science of government before he finished with them, they never would learn elsewhere. Although he made but this one speech, he talked constantly to the groups surrounding him wherever he moved. To his original scheme he had too much tact to make further allusion; but his general opinions, ardently propounded, his emphatic reiteration of the demoralised country's need for a national government, and of the tyrannies inherent in unbridled democracies, wedged in many a chink. Nevertheless, he was disgusted and disheartened when he left for New York, at the end of May. The Convention was chaos, but he could accomplish nothing more than what he hoped he might have done; the matter was now best in the hands of Madison and Gouverneur Morris, and his practice could no longer be neglected.

But although he returned to a mass of work,—for he handled most of the great cases of the time,—he managed to mingle daily with the crowd at Fraunces' and the coffee-houses, in order to gauge the public sentiment regarding the proposed change of government, and to see the leading men constantly. On the whole, he wrote to Washington, he found that both in the Jerseys and in

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New York there was "an astonishing revolution for the better in the minds of the people."

Washington replied from the depths of his disgust:—

> . . . In a word I almost despair of seeing a favourable issue to the proceedings of the Convention, and do, therefore, repent having any agency in the business. The men who oppose a strong and energetic government are, in my opinion, narrow-minded politicians, or are under the influence of local views. The apprehension expressed by them that the *people* will not accede to the form proposed, is the *ostensible*, not the *real* cause of the opposition; but admitting that the *present* sentiment is as they prognosticate, the question ought nevertheless to be, is it, or is it not, the best form? If the former, recommend it, and it will assuredly obtain, maugre opposition. I am sorry you went away; I wish you were back.

To Washington, who presided over that difficult assemblage with a superhuman dignity, to Hamilton who breathed his strong soul into it, to Madison who manipulated it, to Gouverneur Morris, whose sarcastic eloquent tongue brought it to reason again and again, and whose accomplished pen gave the Constitution its literary form, belong the highest honours of the Convention; although the services rendered by Roger Sherman, Rufus King, James Wilson, R. R. Livingston, and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney entitle them to far more than polite mention.

When Hamilton signed the Constitution, on the 17th of September, it was by no means strong enough to suit him, but as it was incomparably better than the Articles of Confederation, which had carried the country to the edge of anarchy and ruin, and was regarded by a formidable number of people and their leaders as so strong as to be a menace to the liberties of the American citizen, he could with consistency and ardour exert himself to

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secure its ratification. After all, it was built of his stones, chipped and pared though they might be; had he not gone to the Convention, the result might have been a constitution for which his pen would have refused to plead.

Manhattan Island, Kings and Westchester counties had long since accepted his doctrines, and they stood behind him in unbroken ranks; but the northern counties and cities of New York, including Albany, were still under the autocratic sway of Clinton. Hamilton's colleagues, Yates and Lansing, had resigned their seats in the Great Convention. Among the signatures to the Constitution his name stood alone for New York, and the fact was ominous of his lonely and precarious position. But difficulties were ever his stimulant, and this was not the hour to find him lacking in resource.

"The Constitution terrifies by its length, complexity, frigidity, and above all by its novelty," he said to Jay and Madison, who met by appointment in his library. "Clinton, in this State, has persuaded his followers that it is so many iron hoops, in which they would groan and struggle for the rest of their lives. To defeat him and this pernicious idea, we must discuss the Constitution publicly, in the most lucid and entertaining manner possible, lay every fear, and so familiarise the people with its merits, and with the inseparable relation of its adoption to their personal interests, that by the time the elections for the State Convention take place, they will be sufficiently educated to give us the majority. And as there is so much doubt, even among members of the Convention, as to the mode of enacting the Constitution, we must solve that problem as quickly as possible. My purpose is to publish a series of essays in the newspapers, signed, if you agree with me,

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Publius, and reaching eighty or ninety in number, which shall expound and popularise the Constitution of the United States; and if you will give me your inestimable help, I am sure we shall accomplish our purpose."

"If you need my help, I will give it to you to the best of my ability, sir," said Jay, "but I do not pretend to compete with your absolute mastery of the complex science of government, and I fear that my weaker pen may somewhat counteract the vigour of yours; but, I repeat, I will do my best with the time at my disposal."

Hamilton laughed. "You know how anxious I am to injure our chances of success," he said. "I hope all things from your pen."

Jay bowed formally, and Hamilton turned to Madison. "I know you must feel that you have done your share for the present," he said, "and there is hard work awaiting you in your State Convention, but the subject is at your finger-tips; it hardly can be too much trouble."

"I am not very well," said Madison, peevishly, "but I realise the necessity,—and that the papers should be read as extensively in Virginia as here. I will write a few, and more if I can."

But, as it came to pass, Madison wrote but fourteen separate papers of the eighty-five, although he collaborated with Hamilton on three others, and Jay wrote five only. The remaining sixty-three, therefore, of the essays, collected during and after their publication under the title of "The Federalist," which not only did so much to enlighten and educate the public mind and weaken the influence of such men as Clinton, but which still stand as the ablest exposition of the science of government, and as the parent of American constitutional law, were the work of Hamilton.

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"It is the fortunate situation of our country," said Hamilton, a few months later, at Poughkeepsie, "that the minds of the people are exceedingly enlightened and refined." Certainly these papers are a great tribute to the general intelligence of the American race of a century and more ago. Selfish, petty, and lacking in political knowledge they may have been, but it is evident that their mental *tone* was high, that their minds had not been vulgarised by trash and sensationalism. Hamilton's sole bait was a lucid and engaging style, which would not puzzle the commonest intelligence, which he hoped might instruct without weighing heavily on the capacity of his humbler readers. That he was addressing the general voter, as well as the men of a higher grade as yet unconvinced, there can be no doubt, for as New York State was still seven-tenths Clintonian, conversion of a large portion of this scowling element was essential to the ratification of the Constitution. And yet he chose two men of austere and unimaginative style to collaborate with him; while his own style for purity, distinction, and profundity combined with simplicity, has never been excelled.

Betsey was ailing, and her doors closed to society; the children romped on the third floor or on the Battery. Hamilton wrote chiefly at night, his practice occupying the best of the hours of day, but he was sensible of the calm of his home and of its incentive to literary composition; it never occurred to him to open his office in the evening. Betsey, the while she knitted socks, listened patiently to her brilliant husband's luminous discussions on the new Constitution—which she could have recited backward—and his profound interpretation of its principles and provisions. If she worried over these continuous labours she made no sign, for Hamilton was rac-

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ing Clinton, and there was not a moment to lose. Clinton won in the first heat. After a desperate struggle in the State Legislature the Hamiltonians succeeded in passing resolutions ordering a State Convention to be elected for the purpose of considering the Constitution; but the result in April proved the unabated power and industry of Clinton,—the first, and not the meanest of New York's political "bosses,"—for two-thirds of the men selected were his followers. The Convention was called for the 17th of June and it was rumoured that the Clintonians intended immediately to move an adjournment until the following year. According to an act of Congress the ratification of only nine States was necessary to the adoption of the Constitution. The others could come into the Union later if they chose, and there was a disposition in several States to watch the experiment before committing themselves. Hamilton, who knew that such a policy, if pursued by the more important States, would result in civil war, was determined that New York should not behave in a manner which would ruin her in the present and disgrace her in history, and wrote on with increasing vigour, hoping to influence the minds of the oppositionists elected to the Convention as well as the people at large. Even he had never written anything which had attracted so wide admiring and acrimonious attention. The papers were read in all the cities of the Confederation, and in such hamlets as boasted a mail-bag. When they reached England and France they were almost as keenly discussed. That they steadily made converts, Hamilton had cause to know, for his correspondence was overwhelming. Troup and General Schuyler attended to the greater part of it; but only himself could answer the frequent letters from leaders in the different states demanding advice. He thought himself

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fortunate in segregating five hours of the twenty-four for sleep. The excitement throughout the country was intense, and it is safe to say that nowhere and for months did conversation wander from the subject of politics and the new Constitution, for more than ten minutes at a time. In New York Hamilton was the subject of constant and vicious attack, the Clintonians sparing no effort to discredit him with the masses. New York City was nicknamed Hamiltonopolis and jingled in scurrilous rhymes. In the midst of it all were two diversions: the fourth of his children, and a letter which he discovered before General Schuyler or Troup had sorted his mail. As the entire Schuyler family were now in his house, and his new son was piercingly discontented with his lot, he took refuge in his chambers in Garden Street, until Betsey was able to restore peace and happiness to his home. The postman had orders to bring his mail-bag thither, and it was on the second morning of his exile that the perfume of violets caused him to make a hasty journey through the letters.

He found the spring sweetness coincidentally with a large square, flowingly superscribed. He glanced at the clock. His devoted assistants would not arrive for half an hour. He broke the seal. It was signed Eliza Capet Croix, and ran as follows:—

MY DEAR SIR: Do you care anything for the opinion of my humble sex, I wonder? The humblest of your wondering admirers is driven beyond the bounds of feminine modesty, sir, to tell you that what you do not write she no longer cares to read. I was the first to detect—I claim that honour—such letters by Publius as were not by your hand, and while I would not disparage efforts so conscientious, they seem to me like dawn to sunrise. Is this idle flattery? Ah, sir! I too am greatly flattered. I do not want for admirers. Nor can I hope to know—to know—so great and busy a man. But my restless

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vanity, sir, compels me to force myself upon your notice. I should die if I passed another day unknown to the man who gives me the greatest pleasures of my life—I have every line you have had printed that can be found, and half the booksellers in the country searching for the lost copies of the *Continentalist*—I should die, I say, if you were longer ignorant that I have the intelligence, the ambition, and the erudition to admire you above all men, living or dead. For that is my pride, sir. Perchance I was born for politics; at all events you have made them my passion, and I spend my days converting Clintonians to your cause. Do not scorn my efforts. It is not every day that a woman turns a man's thoughts from love to patriotism; I have heard that 'tis oftenest the other way. But I take your time, and hasten to subscribe myself, my dear sir,

Your humble and obd't servant

ELIZA CAPET CROIX.

The absence of superfluous capitals and of underscoring in this letter alone would have arrested his attention, for even men of a less severe education than himself were liberal in these resources, and women were prodigal. The directness and precision were also remarkable, and he recalled that she was but nineteen. The flattery touched him, no doubt, for he was very human; and despite the brevity of his leisure, he read the note twice, and devoted a moment to conjecture.

"She is cleverer, even, than Lady Kitty, or Susan and Kitty Livingston, by this," he mused. "She would be worth knowing, did a driven mortal but have the time to idle in the wake of so much intelligence—and beauty. Not to answer this were unpardonable—I cannot allow the lady to die." He wrote her a brief note of graceful acknowledgment, which caused Mrs. Croix to shed tears of exultation and vexation. He acknowledged her but breathed no fervid desire for another letter. It is not to be expected that maturest nineteen can realise that, although a busy man will find time to see a woman if it

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be worth his while, the temptations to a romantic correspondence are not overwhelming.

Hamilton tore up the letter and threw it into the waste basket. Its perfume, delicate but imperious, intruded upon his brief. He dived into the basket as he heard Troup's familiar whistle, and thrust the pieces into a breast pocket. In a moment he remembered that Betsey's head would be pillowed upon that pocket at five in the afternoon, and he hastily extracted the mutilated letter, and applied a match to it, consigning women to perdition. Troup sniffed as he entered the room.

"Violets and burnt paper," remarked he. "'Tis a combination I have noticed before. I wonder will some astute perfumer ever seize the idea? It would have its guilty appeal for our sex—perchance for t'other; though I'm no cynic like you and Morris."

"Shut up," said Hamilton, "and get to work if you love me, for I've no time to write to St. Croix, much less waste five seconds on any woman."

That afternoon he wasted half an hour in search of a bunch of redolent violets to carry home to his wife. He pinned three on his coat.

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